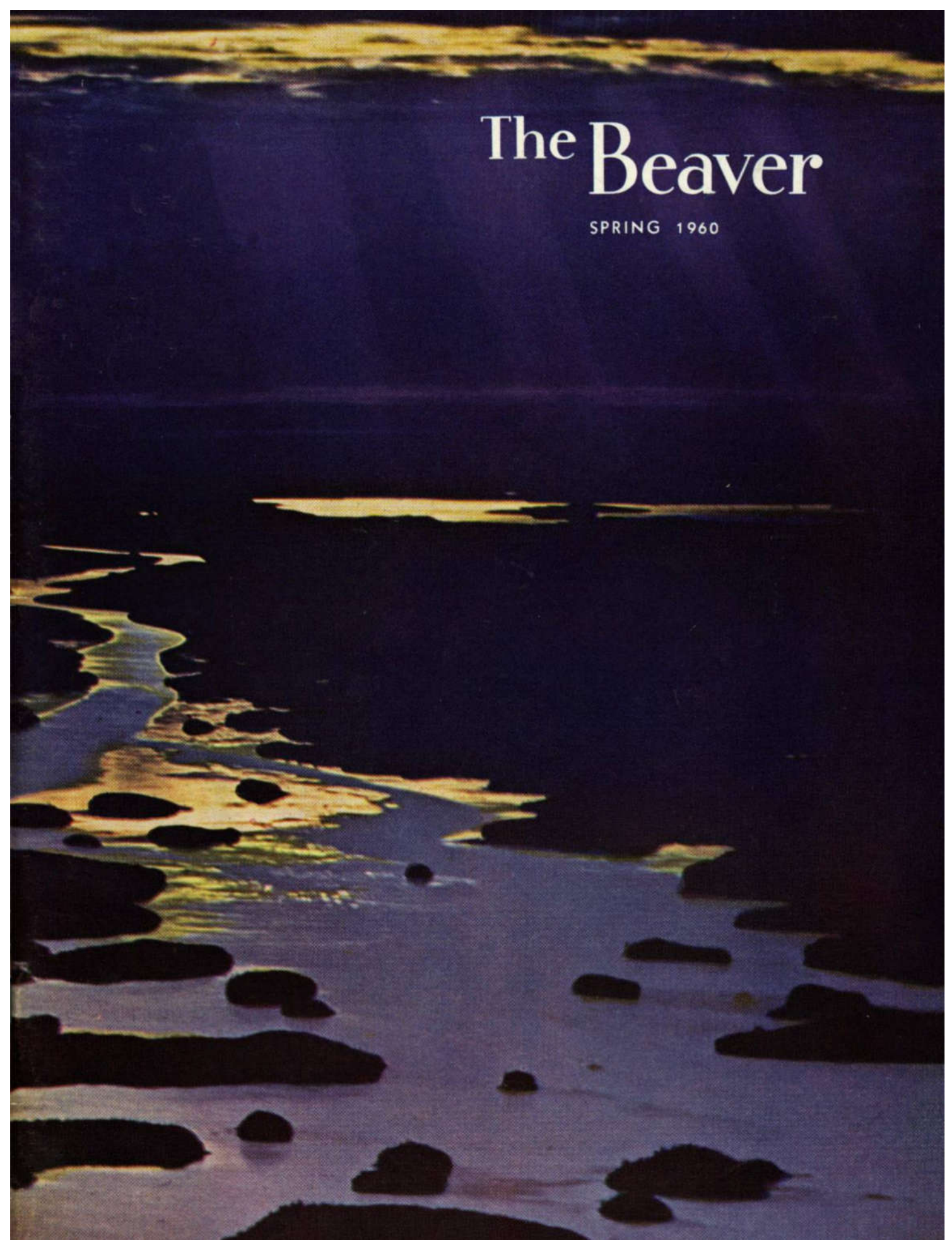
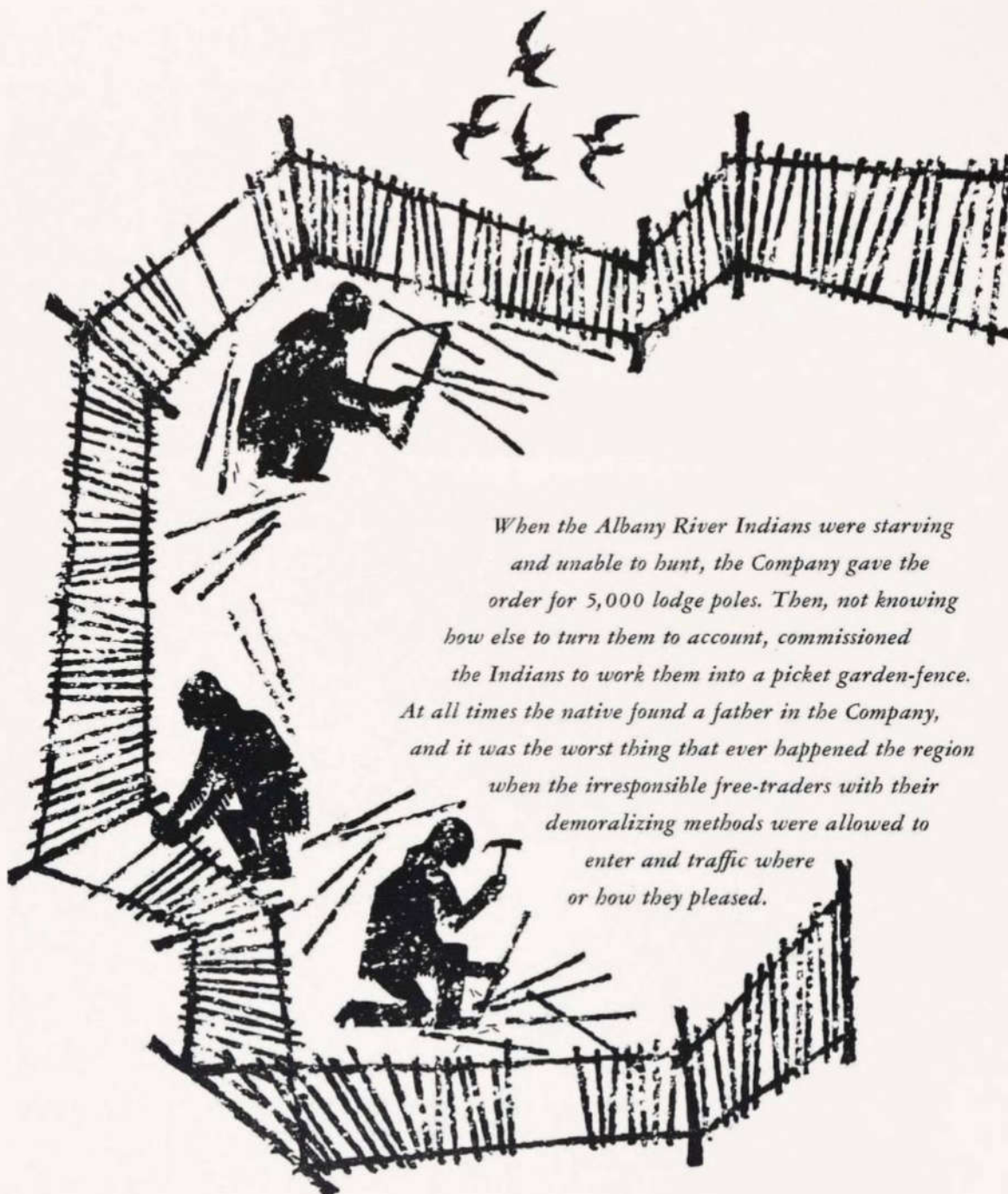


The Beaver

SPRING 1960



from THE ARCTIC PRAIRIES by Ernest Thompson Seton



When the Albany River Indians were starving and unable to hunt, the Company gave the order for 5,000 lodge poles. Then, not knowing how else to turn them to account, commissioned the Indians to work them into a picket garden-fence. At all times the native found a father in the Company, and it was the worst thing that ever happened the region when the irresponsible free-traders with their demoralizing methods were allowed to enter and traffic where or how they pleased.

Hudson's Bay Company.

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670

The Beaver

MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

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COVER

Stormy evening in the North
Colour photograph by Rosemary Gilliat

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

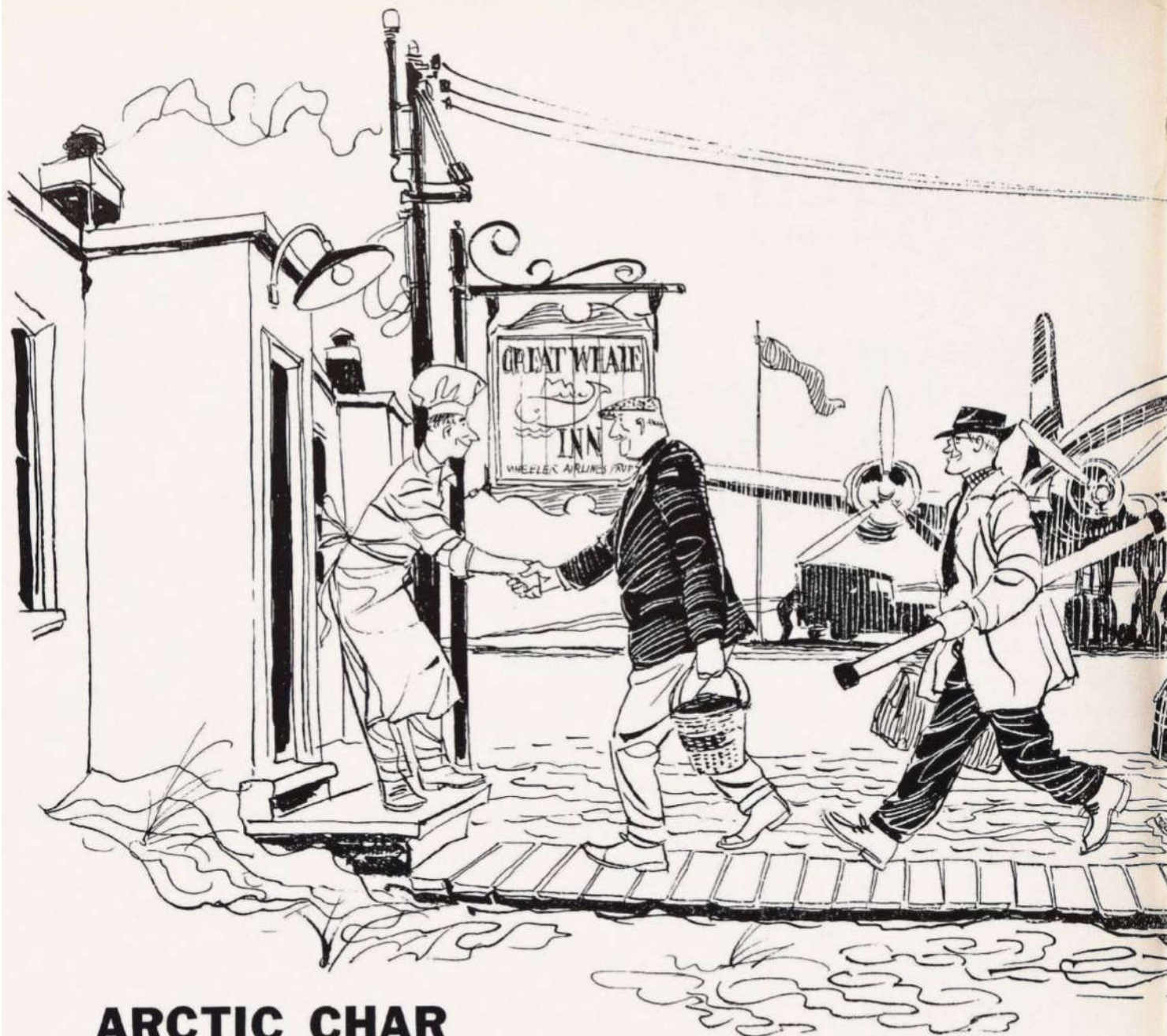
HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE

Hudson's Bay Company.

INCORPORATED 27TH MAY 1670.

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ARCTIC CHAR

TO fly almost a thousand miles north from Montreal for an hour's fishing sounds like something for the very rich. Either that or it's silly. North to Great Whale River and the lakes and rivers in that part of northern Quebec is a long way for a few fish. Possession of more than fifteen pounds (plus one fish) is not allowed. So reads the Quebec fishing law. No fisherman, no matter how inept, can fail to bag that much in an hour in this almost untouched trout country. It's ridiculous!

But put arctic char together with the recent establishment of a scheduled DC4 route from Montreal to Great

Whale twice a week, and it begins to make sense. The schedule is carrying freight and personnel to this jumping off place on the Mid-Canada radar defence line, and there is room for more passengers. The extra seats are going to be filled by fishermen, and not necessarily rich ones. They have heard, and are ready to believe, that they are headed for an experience that should come but once to every trout fisherman. They are excited and have every reason to be.

Offsetting the fifteen pound possession limit of trout, speckled trout or Quebec red trout or both, is the growing knowledge of how to catch the arctic char. And the only

Chef Rene Beauvais welcomes fact finding party arriving at Great Whale River. Eskimo family has been gathering driftwood but father carries only the axe.



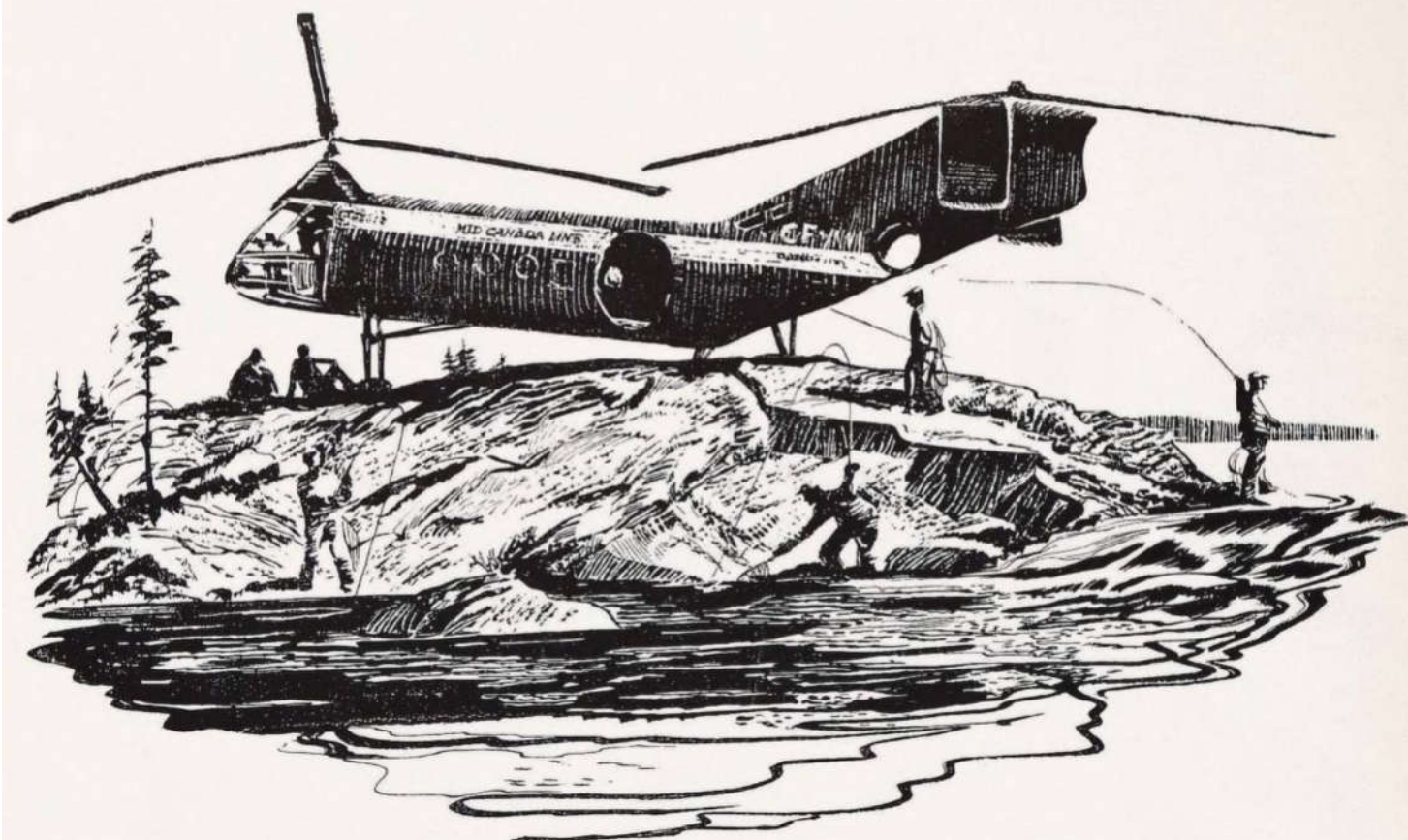
Drawings and story by Ed McNally

restriction so far regarding this great fish is the difficulty of getting him to bite a hook with any regularity.

There are many stories and theories concerning this trout-like salt water fish, and just as much conflict of opinion among those who have encountered them. Sifted down through the arguments in the last decade have come some agreed facts sought out mostly by scientific-minded persons, fish biologists and a few aspiring PhD's who have chosen arctic char for theses.

One meeting of minds is that this is not a true trout as are salmon, brown trout, rainbows and cut-throats. Char

have become landlocked through geological upheavals in past ages. In other ways they have gravitated to fresh water and in resulting mutations may have accounted for many species, none really true trout. Chiefly these are speckled or brook trout with a square tail, grey and lake trout and Quebec red trout with more or less forked tails. Dr. Ray Lawson, no stranger to the Arctic and its fishing, once presented biologists with nine recognizably different speckled trout, all caught in one lake, for identification. He got little satisfaction. But one common characteristic of all these technically non-trout is a second small row of



Helicopters take parties of radar line personnel and visitors to fishing spots.

teeth in the roof of the mouth. So too with the arctic char and being a salt water fish he is assumed to be their ancestor.

It is the pursuit of this salt water fighter that has prompted Wheeler Airlines, while operating to Great Whale, to bring fishermen to the Arctic and at a cost much less than imagined. The airline also owns and operates an establishment called the Great Whale Inn, accommodating forty. This fine little building beside the airstrip has first class food and a cook to match, and things are never livelier in his kitchen than when, with a helicopter hovering overhead, he dashes about slamming down windows before the man-made sandstorm blows into his sautéed mushroom and wine sauce.

Across the long triangular sand-spit on which the Great Whale settlement is situated, down at the river's edge the airline keeps a Norseman float plane. The season for floats in this latitude is short. There is drifting ice in the Bay until early July, and during this time a whisper of warm west wind over the ice blankets Great Whale up and down the coast with a low fog. Drifting inland a mile or two, it

can halt flying to char fishing waters. At these times the happy fishermen are flown inland to a selection of rivers, rapids and lakes and in these early stages are put down for an hour's fishing. Sometimes it is a spot where probably no man, White, Eskimo or Indian, has ever set foot, much less fished.

As a rule the plane waits while the pop-eyed party marvels at the seething waters, fishes them until there are fifteen pounds in every creel, and then stops and watches the fantastic boil of trout. In an hour it's all over.

Regrettably, in some locations easily accessible to Radar Line personnel in helicopters, there has been some vicious slaughter, literally by the half ton, of these magnificent trout. If this fish killing is done in boredom or small knowledge of sportsmanship, it is a poor excuse. Hopefully, perhaps they will be shamed out of such senseless behaviour by contact with more conservation-minded fishermen. It is the best hope, for fishing laws in the North are hard to apply.

More challenging is an expedition to the mouths and inlets of great rivers on the Hudson Bay and Ungava

coasts. Arctic char go as large as forty pounds, and are hard fighters but, alas, fickle hook biters. A few years ago an outdoor writer for a large American magazine, hot on the story of the world's newest game fish, sighted some Eskimos scooping these bright fish over a stone weir into chicken wire nets. Unable to attract one to any sort of lure, he selected the largest fish from the nets, placed a hook in its mouth and released it in the river. His photographer then took a remarkable set of pictures of an arctic char being landed after a terrific fight. These appeared in print of course. The Eskimos, with much giggling, tattled the story to a fishing party the following year.

What has been learnt by sportsmen since those bad old days is that char will almost always take a lure (the right one) near the meeting of fresh and salt water on a rising tide. This recently acquired fishing lore will, in all likelihood, soon be out of date as more anglers head north with their favourite tackle, bait and methods.

On a party in early July of which we were a member, our Norseman put us down on a mile-long sandy beach bordering what can best be described as a lagoon near the mouth of a good sized river. For some reason it is called

Sucker Creek, and lies about forty miles south along the coast from Great Whale. On the rising tide the water was still only forty degrees and there were ice floes visible on the horizon in Hudson Bay. We caught char at the mouth of this river but as the tide slackened and began to turn, they suddenly stopped biting, and nothing we used could attract them further. During a noon cook-out under a surprisingly hot sun we noticed that the tide was running out much faster than expected, leaving less and less and eventually not enough room for a take-off. There started a frantic rush to load and board the Norseman. The pilot, Al Falby, a cool one, inched his way over the shoaling reefs in a freshening wind out to the open water where a good chop was going.

Staggering, lurching and banging through the sea and spray, he got the Norseman unstuck and aloft. As his passengers wiped sweat from stiff upper lips he turned and flew us forty miles further south to Seal River, landing there on a smooth wide stretch at the head of a rapid.

It was here that we first sampled the fabulous speckled trout waters mentioned earlier. Standing knee deep in the slick water at the edge of the swiftly flowing river, trout

*After forty-five minutes fishing,
landing net full of trout, four
fish in all, weighs sixteen pounds.*



Photographing catch of char, speckles and grey trout—and Eskimos.

four pounds and up banged against the legs when they tasted the blood of fish killed in a landing net. Untangling a streamer fly from fish and net and dropping it unnoticed in the water at our feet a large trout snatched it and was off downstream like an express train to the accompaniment of our screaming reel. Forty minutes of this was enough and all that was legal.

There remained only the dizzy exhilaration that this was the be-all and end-all of fishing. We were spoilt forever it seemed.

On another day when the weather was so foul with high winds, drizzle and poor visibility that only gulls were flying we set out on foot along the coast. Trudging a mile or two along the stormy beach we came to a low rocky point polished smoothly black as the back of a whale. A hundred yards off shore a canoe with two Eskimos was bobbing around in the crashing seas. Were they to capsize it was hard to imagine they could survive even if they had been able to swim. They were taking in a gill net and

This is an honest picture of situation when a few drops of blood from trout in landing net attracted others to scene. Streamer fly dropped at feet was taken off in a flash.





Rough sea yields arctic char to Eskimos with gill net but not to surf casting sportsmen. This was in walking distance of Great Whale when weather prohibited flying.

we could see char sliding over the gunwales. If there were fish here, we could catch some too. Rods were rigged with the heaviest spoons and we cast mightily into the teeth of the wind and spray. No char bit. After an hour of this fruitless business we continued along the shore to where the Eskimos had beached their small, square sterned canoe, and were sorting out their catch. They had about thirty fish, ghastly looking toad-fish, some whitefish and a dozen arctic char. Indicating that we had caught nothing they regarded our tackle and shook their heads. They pointed seawards and at our rods. If there was some secret they were trying to impart it did not get through.

Taking a roundabout way back to the Inn, we climbed inland over rain soaked moss, and flower covered rocks landscaped with crystal pools of rainwater or melted snow. Someone remarked that alongside this, the beautiful and expensive rock gardens of Westmount were put to shame. Another conclusion was that when there is no flying there is no fishing.

For the Eskimo, char are a part of his economy, being a principal dog food in many parts of the Arctic. It is hard to believe that he will select others such as the dreadful looking toad-fish, or sculpin, for his own palate, and throw these beautiful fish to his dogs.

Recently the Department of Northern Affairs, in conjunction with the Province of Quebec, has undertaken a study on how to teach Eskimos to fish for char commercially. The object is to net and process this wonderful

eating fish for export south. This is already bringing protests from conservationists and sportsmen who hold that although they seem plentiful, char in the cold arctic waters are slow to reproduce. To illustrate his point one fish biologist pointed out that a given acre of breeding and feeding water in the warm south will produce many more times the number of fish than a comparable area of frigid arctic waters. The detractors also claim that the embryo industry is doomed before it is started, that the projected northern fishing grounds will not stand the pressure. The Eskimo, who heretofore stock-piled only what he needed, will, they say, if given commercial incentive, strip the more accessible char waters in short order. They argue that a flourishing gamefish attraction would be a better thing for the Eskimo in the long run.

In the meantime this new fishing, whether for sport or gain depends a lot upon many secrets not yet given us by this handsomest of creatures.

At the end of the week a Wheeler DC4 landed in front of the Inn on its Friday schedule. Eight hundred miles later, after a midnight landing at Dorval in stifling summer night's heat, we skidded our box of iced trout and char off the plane. Trying to thank Tom Wheeler, he said that he had never had such fishing in his life either, and he is a man who has looked long and found the best.

There is one big char in my freezer still. I won't thaw it out! But it is worn out, just about, from being shown to visitors. ♦

Shooting the stars and chaining the land

BY MARJORIE FORRESTER



*The photographs are from an album in the Foreign Office that accompanied Major Cameron's report on the North American Boundary Commission 1872-75, by courtesy of the Public Archives of Canada.
Above is Lieut. Galwey's astronomical party, complete with fiddlers.*

WHEN Manitoba became a province in 1870, her southern boundary was an imaginary line which had shifted each time a party had been sent to mark it—Colonel Long in 1823, Captain Pope in 1850, and Captain Sykes in 1870. In each case an oak post had been erected on the west bank of the Red River, where this river was intersected by the forty-ninth parallel of latitude, the forty-ninth parallel having been agreed upon in 1818 as the international boundary for the west.

Captain Sykes, sent by the United States government to lay out the military establishment of Fort Pembina,

found, or thought he found, the Hudson's Bay post of North Fort Pembina to be in United States territory. The Collector of Customs, stationed in South Pembina, at once ordered a full inventory of goods at the post to be taken in case they were subject to the payment of duty. Then he reported his action to Washington.

The authorities in Washington lost no time in advising the Collector of Customs to do nothing to upset the existing order of affairs until a joint British and American Commission could be set up to mark the International Boundary properly and permanently.

Though basically the boundary had been fixed in 1783, the inaccurate map led to the statement that from the northwest point of Lake of the Woods the line should be "on a due west course to the River Mississippi." When this was found impossible, the 49th parallel had been agreed upon, but it had never been officially and jointly marked.

After some discussion the two governments agreed to mark the International Boundary all the way from the northwestern point of the Lake of the Woods to the summit of the Rocky Mountains, a distance of about 860 miles, which would make the line continuous from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific. The boundary from the Rocky



Officers of H.M. North American Boundary Commission. Standing: Asst. astronomers Burpee, King, Coster; Capt. Herchmer, Capt. Anderson; Prof. Dawson, astronomer Ashe, surveyor Russell. Sitting: Lt. Galwey, Capt. Ward, Commissioner Capt. Cameron, Capt. Featherstonehaugh, Dr. Burgess, Dr. Boswell.

In the meantime, Mr. Adams G. Archibald, Lieutenant-Governor of the new province of Manitoba, wrote, in September of 1870, to Ottawa from Fort Garry. He told of the brawls at the border caused by the fact that an enterprising individual had put up a false marker about a mile to the north of Captain Pope's oak post, thus leaving a strip of land which neither country could control. In this piece of land buildings had been erected and a flourishing trade of smuggling whisky was being carried on.

This so-called "Whisky Post" and other incidents, made it necessary to have the boundary accurately defined.

Mountains west to the coast had been agreed upon in 1846 and marked by 1862.

Preparations began at once. Britain's first move was to consult with Colonel J. S. Hawkins of the Royal Engineers who had been the commissioner in charge of establishing the boundary at the west coast in 1858-62 (see *The Beaver*, Winter 1955).

Colonel Hawkins gave a full description of the work to be done, the terrain to be covered, the clothing needed for the great variety of weather to be encountered, an estimate of the probable cost, and of the time likely to be



The steamer "Dakota," which carried the British Commission, at Dufferin on the Red River.

taken. He recommended the use of large working parties on account of the short summers, and suggested the routes which could be followed to Red River where operations should begin.

A note was included in the report to the effect that early maps indicated that the meridian due south from the northwest angle of the Lake of the Woods seemed to cut off a piece of land, leaving it in United States territory. This land should be retained for Canada if possible.

In closing his report, Colonel Hawkins gave great credit to Captain S. Anderson, R.E., who had helped to prepare it and who had been with him on the previous commission. Captain Anderson was therefore made chief astronomer with the new British boundary commission.

When the choosing of the personnel began, the Canadian government requested that Captain D. R. Cameron, R.A., be named as the British commissioner. Captain Cameron was the son-in-law of Sir Charles Tupper, and had been aide-de-camp to the Hon. William McDougall, the designated but frustrated lieutenant-governor of the North-West Territory on its annexation to Canada who was turned back at Pembina from his prospective territory.

Captain A. C. Ward, R.E., was chosen as secretary to the commission and accompanied Captain Cameron to Washington in advance of the main party. There these

officers were able to meet and discuss matters with the American officials with whom they would be working.

The remainder of the British Commission consisted of three astronomers, Captains Anderson and Featherstonehaugh and Lt. Galwey, all from the Royal Engineers; surveyors Colonel Forest of the Canadian Militia, Mr. Lindsay Russell, P.L.S., deputy Surveyor-General to the Canadian Government, and Sergeant Kay, R.E.; a group of sappers from the Royal Engineers, most of whom were trained to various trades which included carpentry, blacksmithing, harness making, photography, tailoring, and shoemaking.

Besides this some sub-assistant astronomers and many hired scouts, axemen, teamsters, and haymakers were engaged in Canada. Dr. Burgess was the medical officer, assisted by Dr. Millman. Captain L. W. Herchmer, formerly of 1st Ontario Rifles, took on the position of commissary, Dr. Boswell was the veterinarian and Professor G. M. Dawson the geologist and botanist. These last mentioned Canadian officers were given financial allowances equal to those received by the British officers.

Captain Anderson was entrusted with the tasks of purchasing supplies of meat extracts and dried compressed vegetables, saddlery and blankets in Britain, and of borrowing many of the needed instruments from the Ad-



Dufferin, which was the headquarters of the British Commission, in the spring of 1873.

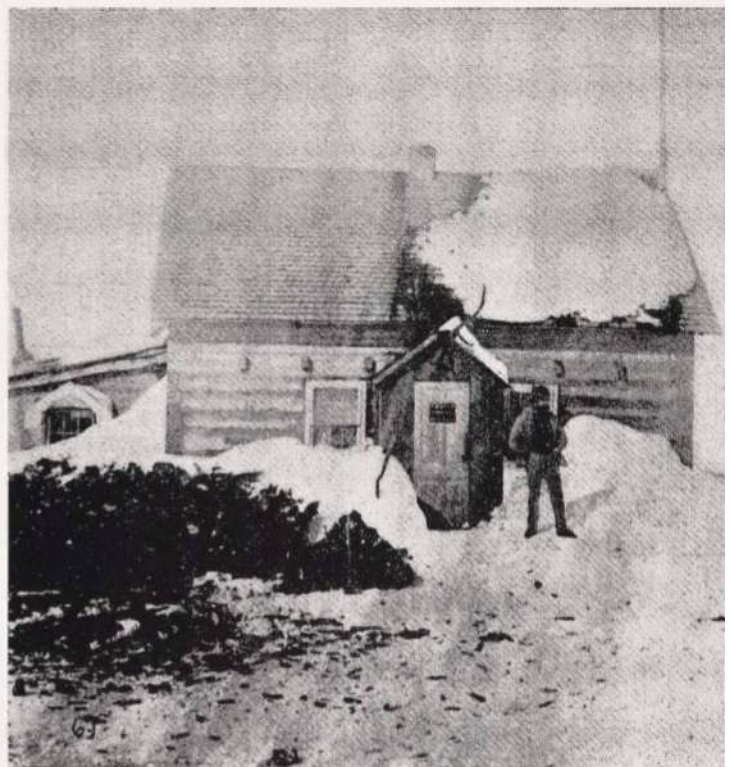
miralty. Photographic supplies were packed by the Engineers School at Chatham.

Lighter pastimes were not forgotten and Captain Featherstonehaugh was instructed to assemble a library, including games and stationery, to be put up in 100-pound parcels "as it would likely have to be man-packed part of the time."

The British party, with supplies, left Liverpool on the 22nd of August 1872. After landing at Quebec they traveled by lake boat to Toronto, by train to Collingwood and by steamer to Duluth. With permission from the government of the United States, the party went up the St. Louis River, and took the train to the Red River of the North.

At Moorhead Commissioner Cameron and Secretary Ward joined them, and the march to Frog Point took place, by way of the old coach road. From here they embarked upon the *Dakota* to reach their final destination.

On 20th September 1872, Her Majesty's North American Boundary Commission was settled under canvas just a little north of the Hudson's Bay post of North Fort Pembina. Captain Featherstonehaugh wrote of this settlement: "There were at that time only about three or four buildings where the boundary strikes the Red River, called North Pembina. One was the Canadian Customs House, another was the Hudson's Bay post which was surrounded



The Canadian Customs House at North Pembina, 1872.

Picture from Capt. Twining's report to the American government shows mules used by the U.S. Commission and dog teams setting out in December 1873.



by a palisade, the others mere log huts inhabited by half-breeds. Exact position of the boundary not known but American Fort Pembina about three miles south."

In preparation for the coming of the commission some buildings had been erected at a point about two miles down the river. This was called North Pembina, but was later renamed Fort Dufferin in honour of the Governor-General of Canada. The buildings first put up were inadequate to house all the supplies and animals, so more building took place during the winter of '72-3.

The two commissioners agreed that the first thing to do was to find the correct point at which the 49th parallel intersected the Red River. When this was done, it was found that the Hudson's Bay post was three hundred feet north of the line, but the Canadian Customs House stood just over five hundred feet south of the line and thus in United States territory.

Incidentally, this first Canadian Customs House in the west was eventually moved across the border and is

now preserved and houses a small museum at Emerson, Manitoba.

A stern warning had been given to all members of the commission to refrain from any show of contempt whatsoever towards the Indians; they were to be welcomed into the camps, and to be informed that the parties were merely marking the line between the United States and Canada. However the commission men were advised to keep fairly close together and always to keep headquarters informed as to where they were. In case of real trouble with Indians, an arrangement was made with the troops of the United States, who formed an armed guard for the American party, to extend their protection to the British parties. This never became necessary so far as the Indians were concerned, but the record states that they were called out once to quell an uprising of the enlisted men in the spring of 1873 at the flooded Pembina river.

When the work began in earnest the men were divided into three astronomical parties, three surveying parties,

United States Boundary Commission camp at the 49th parallel near Red River, 1872.



and the staff. Each group had its own transport and equipment.

Captain Anderson took his party to the North West Angle of the Lake of the Woods, and here the real tribulation began.

The first task at the Angle was to find the reference monument which had been erected in 1826 by Dr. Tiarks. This monument seemed to be completely obliterated,

monument due south until it struck the shore of the lake.

This cutting proved to be a fearful task, as the ground was very swampy and the men never knew when they would sink up to the armpits in horrid muck. Once the frost set in the work was easier. The struggle to cut this line across the Angle continued for sixteen miles, three hundred and ninety seven feet. It was finished on 21st November, '72.



Sappers building one of the boundary mounds.

though much time was spent in looking for it. Finally Mr. James McKay of Winnipeg, spent a few days at the North West Angle with the commissioners, having been told by Indians that older tribesmen had known of the monument. It was described as being a square crib of logs, and after the land had been scoured, it was finally found—under eighteen inches of water.

Of this incident Archibald Campbell, United States Commissioner, reported that Captain Cameron would not agree that this was the proper reference monument, as he (and presumably his Government) hoped that some adjustment might be made in the boundary. He felt strongly that the Angle should remain in Canada. However, Captain Cameron did consent to cut a sight line from the

Meanwhile Captain Featherstonehaugh had taken his astronomical party to Lake Roseau intending to set up a station there. His plans were disrupted when he found the lake to be about six miles south of the boundary. He had great difficulty in finding a ridge of land close to the boundary and solid enough to hold a camp.

When the parties were preparing to take to the field in September a three-day equinoctial gale blew up, hindering their movements and causing the men much discomfort. But all through the terrible winter of '72-3 the work across the swamp went on, the ground surveyors chaining their measurements, the astronomers making their observations by "shooting the stars." In January a bad storm caught two men returning to Dufferin from an eastern depot. The



Metis traders were encountered along the boundary.

storm turned to a real blizzard, so thick that the men were helpless, so cold that the frozen trees cracked like rifle shots. They cut the horses loose and rolled up in blankets and robes to wait out the storm. They might have fared worse, for in Minnesota eighty people died in this storm, among them children returning from school, and a coach-load of travellers. A few days later the men were able to reach their headquarters, suffering from frostbite.

Captain Twining, chief astronomer for the American government found part of the swamp covered with snow but not frozen solid, an insulation of snow on the rushes and reeds keeping the water and muck below soft but very cold. After getting a team of mules into the swamp and barely succeeding in getting them out again, he had narrow sleds made to be pulled by one animal. Then men

were sent across the swamp on snowshoes to tread the snow into the water, where it froze instantly. But if a load or a man slipped off the narrow track thus made, hours were required to right the loads or change the clothing of the unfortunate man.

With supplies being hauled from headquarters to the various camps and depots, scouts carrying mail and orders, astronomical and surveying parties setting up and taking down camps, the slow ox teams of the British and the faster mule teams of the Americans working their way through deadfalls and across streams, and dog teams hustling from place to place, the 49th presented a busier appearance at that time than ever before or since.

When the meridian line was cut from the North West Angle due south and the line had been surveyed and cut

Bridge at the first crossing of the Souris River, June 1874.



from the Lake of the Woods to the Red River, the parties returned to headquarters. Actually work did not cease in the area of the Angle as long as the Boundary commission remained in Canada.

In the spring of '73 work began on the part of the boundary west of the Red River. The British and American parties established alternate astronomical stations and rapidly crossed the prairies. In fair weather they could shoot the stars and complete observations in three days and nights. In cloudy weather sometimes a week was spent at one station. The surveyors marked the line and made their network of chains over a strip of land six miles wide along the 49th parallel.

The troubles encountered in the work here were entirely different from those encountered east of the Red River. Camps had to be located where wood and water were available, but prairie fires often ruined the grazing and damaged the wood. Veterinarian Boswell complained that the depots were too far apart for the transport animals and that they should be given time to rest between trips. At one point wood for fires had to be carried sixty miles, but it would seem that some of the country had once been wooded for one of the men mentioned digging roots out of the ground.

Farther west mountains and rugged country made travel difficult, though the reconnaissance parties found and marked old trails used by hunters. At times roadmaking parties were sent out to make travel possible.

During the latter part of 1873 a site was chosen for a second main supply depot at Wood Mountain. Here the company saw their first buffalo. They came upon a settlement of métis hunters who showed the only hostility that was ever encountered. Long wagon trains brought supplies from Dufferin and more were purchased at Fort Benton in Montana.

Another unpleasant feature of the western plains was the fact that much of the available water was very alkaline. This made the men sick, even if the sloughs had not been used as buffalo wallows. If the fly-tormented buffaloes had wallowed in the pools, even the domestic animals shunned the water, but this did not happen until the vicinity of Wood Mountain was reached.

On 18th August 1874, the advance party of the commission found the trail to the monument erected by the Colonel Hawkins commission of 1858 operating from the west coast. The old monument was found to be in perfect condition. It was at the summit of the 49th parallel, 7,100 feet above sea level.

The surveying parties finished the topography of the boundary, and joined all the other groups to return to Dufferin together.

The iron marker posts were hauled during the winter of '74-75 and placed by a small group of men.

This brought to a close the field work of the commission, but there still remained the reports to prepare and the affair of the North West Angle to settle. ♦

Ox-train of the British Commission leaving the depot at Long River, 81 miles west of Red River.



QUEEN OF THE KOOTENAYS

BY GEORGE V. FERGUSON

Photographs from the collection of Richard Spurway of Nelson, B.C.

I don't know how long the Hudson's Bay Company was in Nelson before I got there. It usually gets there first. But, when I arrived in 1904, Nelson was going strong. It was then the biggest city between Winnipeg and Vancouver, far bigger than any of the Prairie centres which had not yet felt the effect of Clifford Sifton's dynamic immigration policies. It had a street car system—the only tramway between the Pacific Coast and Winnipeg—and this was its biggest boast. The street cars ran only once an hour—every half-hour during rush hours—but, by gosh, it was a street car system. Car No. 1 ran on the hour from the shipyards a mile out of town. At the same moment Car No. 2 started from the top of the hill toward the shipyard. There was a dinky third car which was used on special occasions like Sunday School picnics, but it didn't really count. It was the first two cars that provided the service, and it was a service unmatched by Calgary or Edmonton, Regina or Saskatoon. It was the real stuff, and the Board of Trade made much of it.

The car barns and the cars, together with the sawmill, the smelter, three Chinese market gardens, and many houses were all burnt to the ground in 1910 or 1911 by a fire bug who was in due course arrested and sentenced

to twenty years in jail. But that is another story. All the firebug did was to put the seal on a temporary halt to Nelson's career. At the time we blamed him for wrecking the city's growth, but that was local pride. Nelson was bound to suffer a stand-still in any event when the slump set in.

Nelson's pride was, of course, a consequence of the big Slocan mining boom of the 1890s. The Slocan was a remote and difficult district to get to. Nelson, at the head of navigation of the Kootenay River was not. The Canadian Pacific had pushed its line through the Crow's Nest Pass to Kootenay Landing. Stern-wheelers then carried passengers and cargo up the lake to Procter where a 20-mile railway line gave both their choice whether to proceed to Nelson and beyond by water or by rail. The beyond was served by rail extensions into the fast-dying Slocan country or west towards Trail and Rossland. Rossland was a rich gold-mining country. Trail was then hardly recognized as riding firmly on the wave of the future, destined to become the site of the biggest smelter in the British Commonwealth—which it still is. They had not, in those days, fully worked out the metallurgy required to handle the complex lead and zinc ores from Kimberley.

Mr. Ferguson is editor of the Montreal Star.



Baker Street, Nelson, about 1890—today the business centre of the city.

Nelson was the undisputed Queen of the Kootenays. The Slocan boom was over. Rossland was dying. Trail was nothing. Nelson held the centre of the stage, the big distributing town with the Canadian Pacific running its steamers on the lake and its trains both east and west. The Great Northern ran north from Spokane to Nelson, and when Nelson folk wanted to do some outside shopping it was to Spokane they went, the arduous trip to Vancouver was much longer, and Winnipeg—far-away Winnipeg—was practically an eastern city.

The Queen of the Kootenays proudly claimed a population of 7,000. When the 1911 census announced it was only 4,500, there was a terrible row. Every man, woman and child protested, and the Board of Trade took a strong stand. It was pointed out that the census had not taken into account the rapidly growing population of the suburb, Fairview, which everybody had called Bogustown a little contemptuously until the Bogustown people were needed to swell the census figure. But this statistical setback did

not matter much, for Nelson was still the biggest place in the interior of British Columbia, and the celebrations in Nelson on Dominion Day and at the Nelson Fair in September were the biggest celebrations in the Kootenay country.

There was no fooling about these events. The Kootenay city bands all turned up in competition. The fire brigades all competed to show how fast they could run their wagons down the street and get their hoses running from a hydrant. At the fair-grounds, apart from the balloon ascensions and the strip-tease girls, the crowd watched the rock-drilling competitions and roared themselves hoarse as the hard rock miners fought to drill the deepest hole in the hardest rock in the shortest time. They were tough guys, those hard-rock miners. There was one team from the Slocan country, a Swede called Ericson and a Scot named McGillivray, who always won if they hadn't started celebrating first. And down on the lake front, the lumberjacks were performing miracles in their log-rolling contests. If



Nelson on the West Arm of Kootenay Lake in the late 1880s, in its early days.

you haven't seen two expert lumberjacks rolling a log between them, spinning it round in the water at incredible speed in order to knock their opponent off for a ducking, you haven't lived.

Nelson, they tell me, is now connected to the outside world not only by rail but by road. The big shots of Trail now live in their country houses along the trails the English-born fruit farmers used to build along the West Arm. They motor past Nelson on their way to their executive offices. There was none of that nonsense in my day. In those years, when you lived at Nelson, you sometimes took the boat to Kootenay Landing to go east; or you sometimes, took the Great Northern south. Sometimes you took the C.P.R. west to Castlegar and thence on over the perilous trestle bridges into the Boundary Country, Grand Forks, Greenwood and Phoenix, the last now a ghost town because a mountain that was supposed to be solid copper turned out to be a town built on the top of a mountain which had a mere cap of copper ore which was quickly worked out.

But these false hopes had nothing to do with Nelson, the Queen of the Kootenays. Those were the days when the boys would gather every evening on the city wharf to watch the C.P.R.'s *Moyie* or *Kokanee* race the Great Northern's *International* into port every night. The companies warned their skippers not to race, but the skippers

never followed their orders and always charged into Nelson at full speed. Then off the boats poured the miners and lumberjacks, their pay cheques hot in their hands, ready to tip any boy two-bits or four-bits to guide them quickly to the nearest saloon or the licensed houses, conveniently situated near the Wharf.

I don't want to give a false impression of my home town. Nelson is built on a mountain-side. If the lower streets were occupied by Chinatown, the red-light district and the fair-grounds, and if the two lower streets, Baker and Vernon Streets, were the only thoroughfares levelled off enough to permit the passage of Nelson's only motor car—hired out for the afternoon airing of the ladies of lower town—that was not all of Nelson. The upper town was respectability out of this world.

Here, at the corner of Baker and Stanley Streets, was the Hudson's Bay Company store, presided over by Mr. Gigot, a French Catholic who was a great friend of my father, who was the Presbyterian minister. Mr. Gigot was a genial character who believed the cure for most human ills was a quick, sharp shot of old French brandy which he kept in good supply. He tried it several times on my father who appreciated the gesture but could not stomach the cure. Mr. Gigot's store had two entrances, both used by the best people in Nelson. One led into the dry goods section; the other into the kind of old-fashioned grocery

section which smelt of old cheese, smoked meats, coffee and spice, as all old-fashioned grocery stores did. It was at one of his counters that my mother was offered Swiss cheese. "Gruyere?" she asked innocently. "Certainly not," replied one of Mr. Gigot's assistants indignantly. "It's imported."

But the upper town grew more and more respectable as one climbed the mountain on the lower slopes of which it was built. The higher one got, the further one was removed from the roaring, lusty regions where the miners and the lumberjacks periodically spent their pay-day money. On the upper slopes, vice was limited to gambling on Slokan and—later on—Cobalt mining stocks, and little euchre parties. Here the tycoons, such as they were, dwelt. None of them was rich. All of them wanted to be and some of them didn't do a bad job. They all lived respectably. They attended my father's church, or the Anglican Church, or the Methodist Church. One of the finest funerals I ever attended was that of the Mayor's wife who was buried from the Methodist Church, the finest in town. But the Mayor, whose political success depended on the support of the lower town, found the funeral attended not only by

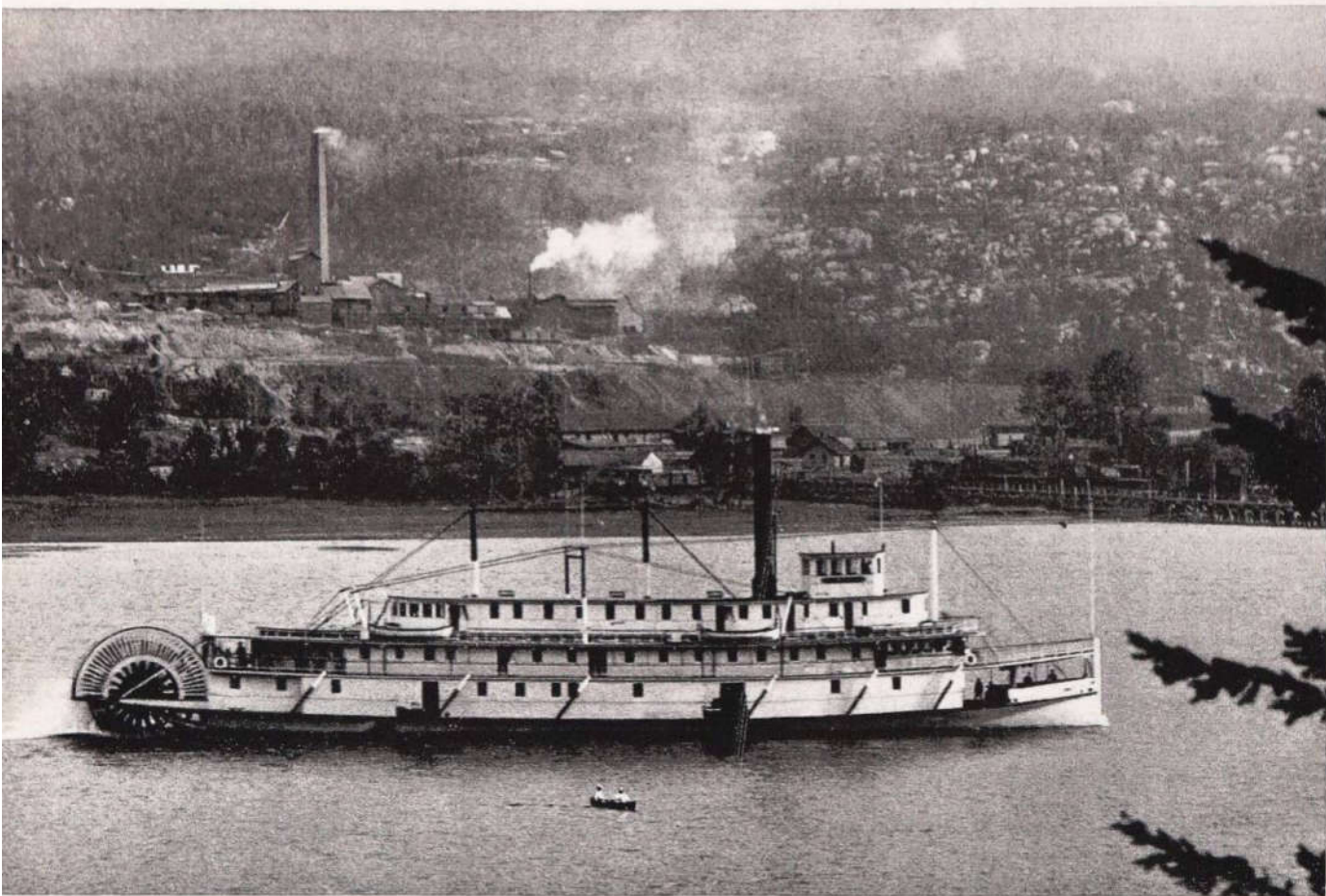
the better people but also by the Nelson underworld which hired the town's only motor car at the vast expense of \$5 an hour in order to follow the hearse to the cemetery which, fortunately, did not demand too steep gradients for the cortege.

The upper town liked to pretend the life of the lower town did not exist. Its major social function in summer was the "Strawberry Social." A Ladies' Aid Society would string a garden with Chinese lanterns, and the godly would repair to it in hordes to pay 25 cents for a dish of strawberries or ice cream, and thus help to pay the deficit on the church's heating bill or expand the foreign missionary activities of the organization. These events attracted large crowds and wiped out many deficits.

The upper town was indeed peopled by families from Ontario and some from England. These were strict in their sabbatarian observances. Most frowned on card-playing and upon social drinking. A good many homes would have nothing to do with dancing, and they regarded with horror the gayer approach to life which was brought to Nelson by the pay-days of the mining and lumber camps. A flourishing Chinatown was regarded askance as being little

The streetcars of Nelson at Baker and Stanley streets. The H B C store on the corner, run by Mr. Gigot, was opened in 1900.
B.C. Archives





The Hall Mine smelter, which was burnt down in 1911, in operation. In front is the S.S. "Kuskinook."

better than a four-block-square opium den though there was little real evidence that the Nelson Chinese community was not as respectable as it could be by the most exacting Methodist standards.

It does not do, however, to regard the Nelson of fifty years ago as a town torn in two by divergent moral standards, or a community dominated by puritanical standards. It was a small town whose narrowness was tintured and modified by its pioneer environment. Few communities could rival it in its lack of racial and social prejudices. There was only one public school and only one high school. Its rooms contained not only the children of Ontario or Old Country parents but the children of Negroes, Chinese, Japanese as well. These all lived together, played together and entered each other's homes freely.

Nelson was a paradise for children. The long, soft summer offered every attraction of boating, canoeing, swimming, and hiking. In the winter two streets were set

aside for tobogganing. Traffic was ordered to give the youngsters the right of way. There was skating on the lake. In addition the town boasted a rink of standard size, again the biggest west of Winnipeg, where Lester Patrick and his brother Frank, stars more than fifty years ago of the Stanley Cup Montreal Wanderers, were laying the foundation for careers of even greater brilliance in professional hockey. Nelson itself never won, or even competed for, the Stanley Cup, but the western teams which tried played Nelson first, testing their strength against the Patrick boys before they went east.

Lester was a great local figure, his father a Montreal lumberman, Joseph Patrick, who had gone west to find his fortune. His son was great not only on the ice. He announced his conversion one year when revivalists held a series of great rallies in the Alice Rolling Skating Rink, and enlivened future meetings by reciting Drummond's Quebec dialect poems to large and enthusiastic religious gatherings



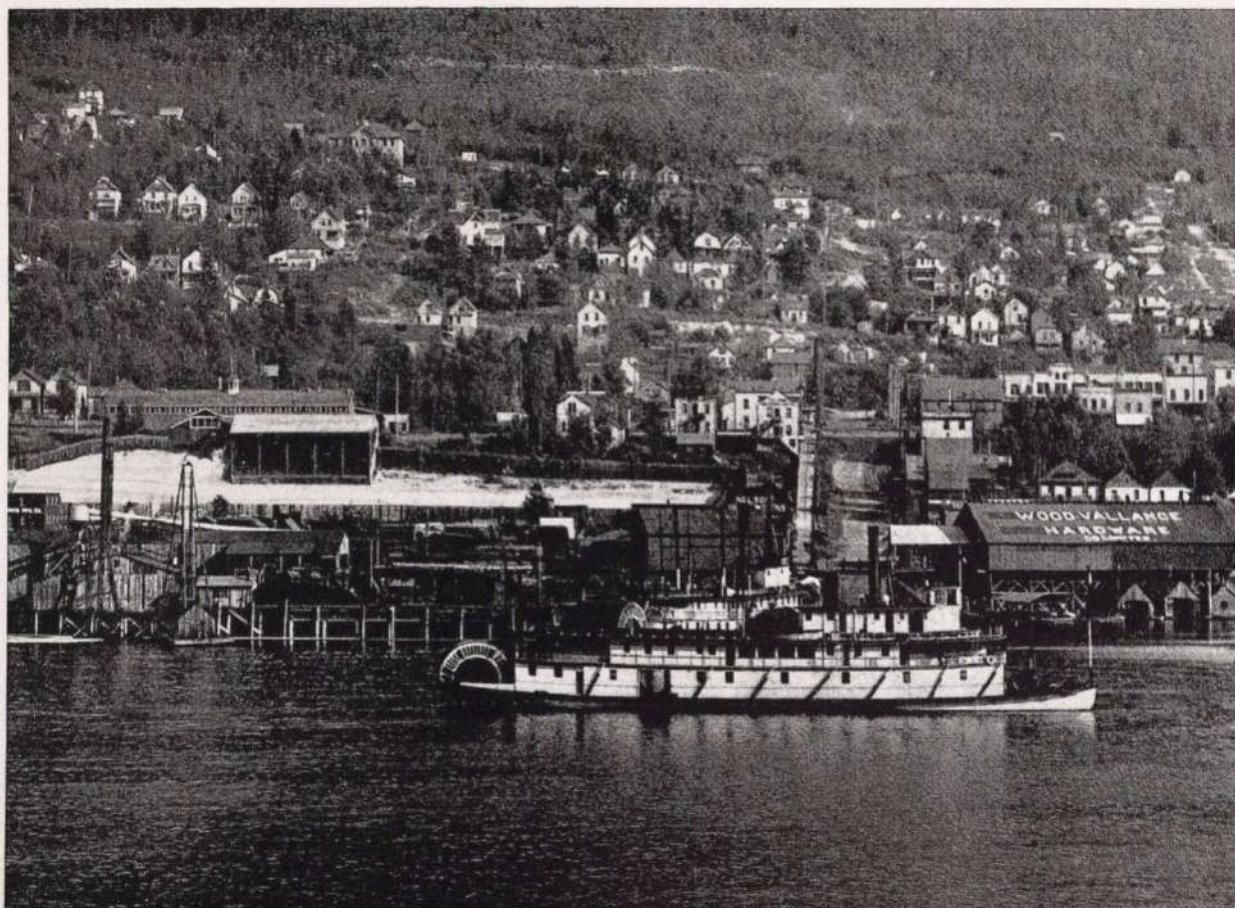
The steamer landing about the turn of the century. Here passengers disembarked from lake boats and entrained for points west.

which ended always with new converts. Ultimately, the evangelists and the Patricks alike left town, leaving the place poorer for their absence.

Looking back at it, Nelson must then have been an in-grown town, living too much within itself and its contacts with the outside world limited to what was provided by the *Nelson Daily News*, a paper which still flourishes. My father used to say that he thought life in a mountain valley eventually did strange things to mankind's horizons. But my own memories of the place are those of a perfect

childhood with every kind of outdoor recreation at one's very doorstep, and a close-knit community of friends who worked and played harmoniously. It was big enough but not too big, and if it were possible I would like to see everyone brought up in a very small town before being forced into the pace of the great urban centres. There was a sense of democracy—a real social democracy—I have never found anywhere else. Though in those days, of course, we didn't use two dollar words to describe the kind of life we had. ♦

The sternwheeler "Moyie" beneath Nelson's steeply rising streets in 1905.

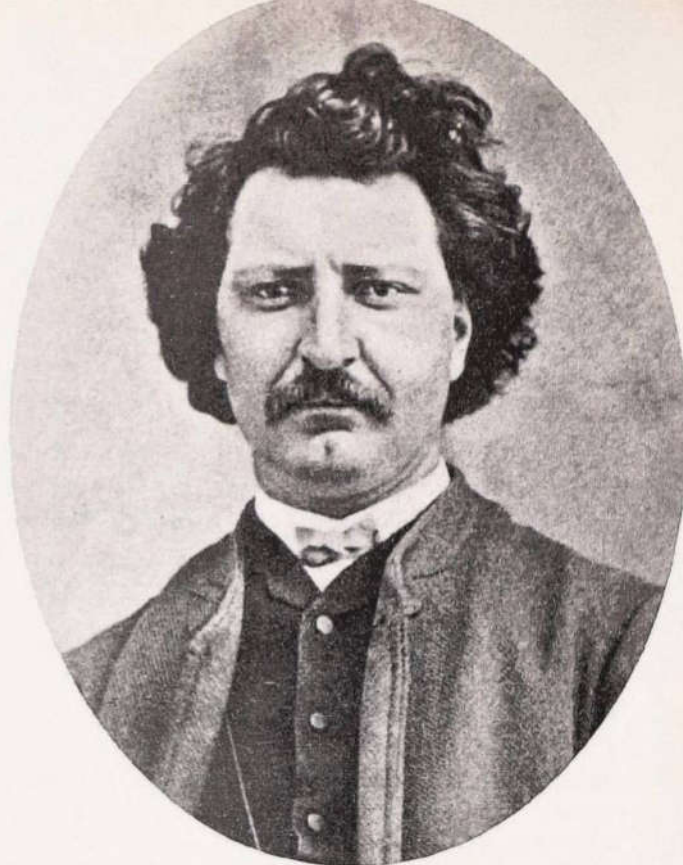


BY GEORGE WOODCOCK

author, broadcaster, and editor
of "Canadian Literature"

LOUIS RIEL

defender of the past



ON the 12th May 1885, after four days of hard fighting, a Canadian army of seven thousand men stormed the village citadel of Batoche in the Saskatchewan prairies, and brought to an end the last of the rebellions which for fifty years had marked the stages of Canada's growth from a group of disunited colonies and territories into a united Dominion. The tiny rebel force of three hundred French-Indian halfbreeds who had defended Batoche so obstinately did not surrender; as their ammunition ran out, they scattered into the surrounding prairies, and many of them fled to safety over the American border. But the leader who—cross in hand—had encouraged them during the siege with his prophetic exhortations, was not among those who escaped. A few days after the collapse of the rebellion, Louis Riel was captured by an American buffalo hunter who had taken service with the Canadian forces, and, six months later, despite widespread protests in Quebec, he was hanged for treason at Regina.

Riel's execution was not only the end of a life dramatically dominated by rebellion and exile. It also marked the death of the free prairie life of the days when Indians and part-Indian hunters shared the great plains, undisturbed by the advance of civilization. And it remained a lasting source of bitterness which affected Canadian political life—and particularly relations between French and English Canadians—for many years afterwards.

Yet, though the circumstances of his fate gave a national and sensational prominence to Louis Riel on the two occa-

sions when he played a part in Canada's history, during the Red River rising of 1869-70 and the Northwest rebellion of 1884-5, his own aims and actions were linked intimately and obstinately with the plight of a small group of mixed French and Indian blood. He was a rebel defending a tiny section of a dying order, not a revolutionary aiming to change the world. Historical coincidence provided the larger consequence of his acts. It is indeed true that had Riel not risen in 1869, Manitoba might not have become a province until many years later; it is also true that had he not died in 1885 Quebec might not have been so long a Liberal stronghold. But Riel himself was completely uninterested in the politics of Quebec, and even the creation of Manitoba seemed to him only the means to a more restricted end—the maintenance of the liberty and the identity of his people.

His people—or his Nation as he liked to call them—were the Métis, the halfbreed hunters and voyageurs who appeared in the prairies during the eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries. Their life was connected intimately with the westward thrust of the fur trade during this period, and they created for themselves a way of life fitted to the hunting economy of the primitive west, based largely on the great annual buffalo hunts with their harvests of skins and pemmican. But it was perhaps the very success of their adaptation to the life of the unbroken prairies that made it so difficult for the Métis to assimilate into the new way of life that came into the region during the 1860s with settlement and the railways. Riel himself

Note: In this article the term Métis is used in its historical sense denoting people of French and Indian ancestry, and 'halfbreed' is used for people of European and Indian blood.

became more than a leader of the Métis; in the often irrational extremity of his acts he seemed the very personification of the desperation felt by this little society of hunters and trappers as the modern world closed in upon them.

This article is concerned mainly with the final phase of Riel's life, leading up to the last rising of the Métis along the North Saskatchewan River in 1884-5. But the similarity of the circumstances underlying the two insurrections which Riel led justified at least a brief consideration of the roots and results of the Red River insurrection.

It came at the end of a period of uneasy adjustment. For some time the way of life to which the Métis were accustomed was growing increasingly difficult because of the change in the economic pattern on the eastern edge of the prairies. The fur trade was declining, the buffalo herds were diminishing and retreating westward and, faced with a rapid collapse of their traditional sources of livelihood, the Métis who remained in the Red River valley began, unwillingly, to turn to farming, which they did by staking out—in the manner of their Quebec ancestors—long strip farms that had narrow river frontages and often ran two miles back towards the prairies.

When the Canadian Government completed its agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company for the transfer of Rupert's Land to the new Dominion, the inhabitants of the Red River settlements became uneasily aware that no provision had been made for the guarantee of their rights. Their fears seemed to be confirmed when the Coalition government of Sir John A. Macdonald passed anticipatory legislation in June 1869 for the government of Rupert's Land and the North Western Territory. The act provided

for a lieutenant-governor who would have power "to make provision for the administration of justice, and generally to make, ordain, and establish all such laws, institutions and ordinances as may be necessary for peace, order and good government." The Ottawa government was in fact proposing to impose the very kind of colonial administration by a governor with an appointed council against which the Canadians themselves had reacted so bitterly in the 1830s, the days of the Mackenzie and Papineau rebellions.

This prospect was welcomed neither by the Métis nor by the English-speaking halfbreeds of the Red River, but it was the Métis who took the initiative of resistance, largely as a result of a series of precipitate actions on the part of William McDougall, Minister of Public Works in the Macdonald administration.

In September 1868, even before the negotiations for transfer were completed, McDougall sent a government contractor to build a road from the Red River to the Lake of the Woods, on what was still Company territory; then, in October 1869, with the actual transfer of government still in the future, McDougall sent Colonel J. S. Dennis into the Red River settlements to make a general survey.

This survey, begun by Canadian officers in what was still legally un-Canadian territory, became the immediate cause of the Red River uprising. The Métis feared that in the land registration which followed they might be driven from their farms, and it was at this point that Louis Riel appeared as their leader. His first open act of resistance consisted of jumping on the chain of the surveyors who were measuring the land of his cousin, André Nault. The failure of the Canadian authorities to perceive the real significance of this tiny demonstration of resentment

The capture of Batoche in May 1885 as depicted in the contemporary "Illustrated War News."





Riel with his Red River Council of 1869-70. In front are Bob O'Lane, Paul Proulx. Seated: Pierre Poitras, John Bruce, Louis Riel, O'Donoghue, Francois Dauphinais; standing: Guilmette, Pierre Delorme, Thomas Bunn, Xavier Page, Andre Beauchemin, Baptiste Tourond, Thomas Spence.

helped to precipitate the crisis which turned a protest movement into an insurrection.

When, with singular unimaginativeness, the Cabinet appointed as lieutenant-governor of the new territory the very William McDougall who had been responsible for the survey and road-building projects, the Métis feared that he would initiate an anti-French regime, and decided to prevent his entry by raising a body of armed men and setting up a barrier across the road by which he was expected to arrive after his journey through American territory. McDougall's peculiar reactions to this move, his issuing of a faked Royal Proclamation to give him authority on the Red River before it had actually been granted to him, his attempt to raise armies of English-speaking settlers to create civil strife around Fort Garry—all of these acts helped to drive the Métis more strongly towards Riel, and to propel Riel himself towards an extremity of attitude to which his impetuosity of character made him naturally liable.

There followed the proclamation by Riel of the Provisional Government—a Provisional Government, it should perhaps be noted, that was not in rebellion against the Dominion, since the Dominion still had no authority on the Red River, and which was supported by many English-speaking settlers. English delegates took part in the important sessions of the Provisional Government in which the List of Rights for presentation to the Canadian Government was drawn up.

By now, with McDougall removed from the scene by a Cabinet acutely embarrassed by his illegal actions, Sir John A. Macdonald was willing to negotiate unofficially, through Donald Smith and Bishop Taché, with the insur-

rectionaries of the Red River, and the Manitoba Act of 1870 remains a historic achievement for which much of the credit must be given to Riel, since if he had never called the Métis to resistance, if he had never conducted the Provisional Government with a restraint only marred by one inexplicable atrocity, it is most unlikely that the people of the Red River would have enjoyed provincial rights for many years to come.

It was the single atrocity, the execution of Thomas Scott for alleged treason, that prevented Riel from ever assuming the career in Canadian public life for which his talents seemed to suit him eminently. Scott was an Orangeman, frankly anti-Métis, who had been a ringleader in more than one of the ill-organized attempts by Canadian immigrants to overthrow the Provisional Government, but his execution was as unwise as it was unjustified, since it served to make him a martyr in the eyes of his fellow Ontarians. The cry for vengeance on Scott's killers became such a burning issue that no leading politician—certainly no politician as calculating as Sir John A. Macdonald—dared openly flout public opinion. Consequently, when Colonel Garnet Wolseley set off for the Red River in the summer of 1870 to establish Canadian authority there, he did not carry with him the amnesty which had been promised orally through Bishop Taché. Riel quietly departed from Fort Garry on the approach of the Canadian forces, and his prudence in doing so can be judged by Wolseley's fire-eating first proclamation, referring to Riel as leader of "the banditti who recently oppressed Her Majesty's loyal subjects in Red River."

From this time Riel's life became that of a wanderer, never secure, never able to enjoy fully the rights which he,

more than any other individual, had brought to the people of the Canadian West. He was dogged perpetually by his great error, the killing of Scott. Although the amnesty was not granted, no warrant against him was actually issued until 1873, but even before that the Ontario legislature, illegally interfering in the affairs of Manitoba, set a price of \$5,000 on his head. Sometimes Riel ventured over the border into Canada; at other times, when his situation became dangerous, he returned to the United States, but even here he was not safe from kidnappers interested in the Ontario reward. Three times the Métis elected him to the Dominion Parliament for one of the Red River constituencies; three times his fellow legislators voted him out of office. Finally, in 1875, the Canadian Parliament passed the long-promised amnesty bill, but even now the government dared not defy the still-burning Ontario hatred for Riel; a special clause decreed for him a sentence of five years' banishment.

For a long period he retreated into obscurity, working as a labourer in New York and becoming deeply religious (he claimed to have seen a vision in the Cathedral in Washington). Finally, having found it impossible to fit into metropolitan life, he went westward in 1879 and joined a group of Métis living in Montana.

He found that his people, like him, had been unable to accept the new, commercial society which the railways had brought with them into the West. With the rapid acceleration of immigration, Manitoba had quickly become a predominantly English-speaking province, and many of the Métis had escaped from it into the western prairies of Canada or the United States, where they resumed their old life of hunting and trapping.



Among the Montana Métis, who lived on a level hardly less primitive than that of their Indian neighbours, Riel put his experience as a former ruler to work, persuaded the band to accept an elected assembly, and initiated a code of by-laws for regulating behaviour. Later he married a Métisse and left his hunter friends to teach in a Jesuit school near Fort Benton. He seemed set for a simple, undistinguished existence when, in June 1884, a group of Métis from the North Saskatchewan valley crossed into Montana to arouse his dreams of action by asking his help in bettering their conditions.

What had happened in the Saskatchewan Valley paralleled fairly closely the course of events on the Red River more than a decade before. The region which is now Sas-



Métis on the western prairies in 1884.

Geological Survey

katchewan and Alberta was then part of the Northwest Territories, ruled by a governor with an appointed council, such as had originally been planned for Manitoba; this time, however, there was the important difference that this was not a government held back at the border, but an administration well established and protected by the recently formed North West Mounted Police.

As in the Red River valley fifteen years before, the economic pattern of Métis life was changing owing to the destruction of the buffalo herds by indiscriminate slaughter during the late 1870s; now the halfbreeds were turning to farming, and encountering the same troubles with surveyors and land registration as they had met in the past.

A halfbreed guide employed by the Boundary Commission in the 1870s.
Public Archives

English speaking settlers, they claimed, were often favoured, and many Métis farmers were thrust off their lands to make way for claim jumpers from the East. Petition after petition had been sent in to the territorial government, with no evident result, and in the end the Métis decided to call on Riel to champion them as he had done in the past.

Riel could not resist such an appeal, and he arrived early in July at the Métis centre of Batoche on the North Saskatchewan, where he preached his theory that the Métis, as the heirs of the Indians, should be compensated for the prairie lands taken by intruders. At first he advocated peaceful agitation, and, as before, prepared a Bill of Rights demanding provincial autonomy, definite land grants to halfbreeds and better support for the Indians who had suffered so severely from the virtual extinction of the buffalo. At this early stage, as on the Red River, he aroused considerable sympathy among the English-speaking farmers of the region, who had their own grievances.

The government itself ignored the Bill of Rights, as it had ignored previous petitions, but its officials tried to detach the Métis from Riel by vague verbal promises of an investigative commission and by suggestions that Riel would be shortly arrested and deported, which could have been done quite legally, since he had become an American

citizen. But the very frustration of combating an enemy so hard to engage seemed to propel Riel towards extreme action. Early in March 1885 he announced his intention of forming a provisional government, hopeful that what had been effective in the past might work again. On the 14th March the talk of armed insurrection among the Métis had become so threatening that Major Crozier, commanding the police post at Fort Carlton, wired to Regina for reinforcements. Riel learnt of this move and, on the 18th March, the eve of St. Joseph's Day, when the hunters gathered at one of the local villages for the feast of their patron, he and his followers seized all the ammunition in Batoche, arrested the officials, cut the telegraph wires, and formed their provisional government.

The rebellion had some immediate military success. On the 26th March almost a hundred police and volunteers clashed with a much smaller body of halfbreeds and Indians; in the battle that followed, the police were decisively beaten and forced to withdraw.

But these minor victories merely concealed from Riel and his friends the hopelessness of their situation. The recourse to violence alienated their English sympathizers. Among the Métis the priests and the more pious laymen were antagonized by the heretical pronouncements into which Riel's religious obsessions were leading him. Even the uprising of the Indians which the Métis had hoped would follow their own insurrection was disappointing, for only two important chiefs, Poundmaker and Big Bear, took to the war path, with less than a thousand warriors between them. The attempt to create an alliance with the Indians, indeed, shows the extent of Riel's detachment from reality at this moment, for the first act of Big Bear's men was to massacre nine people at Frog Lake, an incident which could not help affecting adversely the attitude of other western Canadians towards the Métis as the originators of the wave of violence.

The rebels of Batoche, indeed, were virtually isolated, since they did not even attempt to join forces with Poundmaker and Big Bear. Yet Riel placed his hopes in guerilla warfare against the large Canadian forces which he knew



*St. Peter's Mission in Montana, where Riel taught 1883-4.
Historical Society of Montana*

Riel's Councillors in 1885. The numbers show: 1, Johnny Sansregret; 2, Pierriche Parranteau; 3, Pierre Gariépy; 4, Philip Garnot; 5, Albert Monkman; 6, Pierre Vandal; 7, Baptiste Vandal; 8, Toussaint Lucier; 9, Maxime Dubois; 10, Jimus Short; 11, Tourond; 12, Emanuel Champagne.





Buell Photo: Public Archives

Louis Riel addressing the jury in the Court House, Regina, 1885.

were being assembled in the east, and he outlined a plan for capturing the important officers to hold them as hostages while the Métis grievances were negotiated. In the meantime, he persuaded his followers that they should practice "passive resistance under arms." The six weeks that passed before General Middleton arrived with his forces, recruited hastily and hurried to Qu'Appelle on the Canadian Pacific Railway, were spent in building barricades and wrestling with the problems of theology. The Provisional Government, ardent converts to Riel's religious notions, proclaimed him a prophet, with the title of Exovede, accepted Saturday as the Lord's Day, and decreed Hell out of existence as incompatible with the infinite mercy of God.

While such questions of belief were being enthusiastically debated, the Métis superiority in guerilla warfare was wasted owing to Riel's insistence on postponing action until it became inevitable—and also too late. Middleton was allowed to march freely almost two hundred miles over the prairies and to establish his headquarters within thirty-five miles of Batoche. Only on the 23rd April, when the army began to advance on Batoche, did the Métis, with a few Cree and Sioux warriors, move out of their stronghold. They selected a gully called Fish Creek as a place of ambush, and on the next day the fighting began. The army's scouts detected the ambush, and the small

Métis force of two hundred men, which dwindled to less than sixty as the day went on, faced the assault of the Canadian army many times its size. The halfbreeds checked Middleton so severely that it was more than three weeks before he was prepared to mount the final attack on Batoche. A few days later a column which had been sent to Battleford under Colonel Otter engaged in a drawn battle at Cut Knife with Poundmaker's Indians.

Despite these temporary halts to the Canadian forces, defeat was inevitable for the Métis. There was no one to come to their aid, no further stronghold to which they could retreat, no anxious government willing to negotiate unofficially as in 1870. And so the fall of Batoche led to the collapse of the movement and the death of Riel. This time he seemed to have achieved nothing; it was to be twenty years before, in 1905, Saskatchewan would finally achieve provincial status and an elected government, and by that time the Métis society he defended would have joined the great buffalo herds in a half-forgotten past.

Yet, in an unexpected way, even this abortive rebellion was to make Riel's shadow lie long over Canadian political life. It occurred at a time when the preponderant English influence in Canada was actively resented by the French Canadians in Quebec; under sentence of death, Riel became—in the eyes of people who had shown no particular sympathy for his cause while he was fighting it—a symbol of French tradition and culture standing out against English tyranny. Macdonald, again Prime Minister, unwisely ignored the rising cry of protest, and allowed Riel to hang. Two years later, in the elections of 1887, the image of Riel was potent enough to detach the French Canadians from their traditional loyalty to political conservatism and to play a great part in forming the alliance between liberalism and French Canadian regionalism which lasted for two generations from Riel's death into the middle of our own decade. It was an ironical victory, which did nothing to preserve the vanishing Métis way of life. ♦



THE NEW KAYAK

PICTURE STORY BY FREDERICA KNIGHT



Traditional hunting craft of the Eskimos is the kayak. The slender, delicately balanced vessel is ideal for its purpose by reason of its speed and silence and its lightness. The hunter fits snugly into the 'manhole' and uses a double-bladed paddle which rests in front of the cockpit (preferably on a piece of ivory) so that the levering motion is almost effortless. In former times nearly every man owned a kayak but now there are few in use and those mostly in the region of Hudson Strait and the northeast part of the Bay where they are used for fish net tending and floe-edge sealing.

In construction, the light wooden frame and the skin covering are entirely lashed and sewn, though now a few nails may find their way in, making the kayak quite flexible. Building the frame and putting on its covering is men's work; treating and sewing the skins is done by women. The best skins for a kayak are square flippers or bearded seal. They are soaked and scraped to remove the hair and well washed, and are kept wet while they are being worked. The flippers are left on till the final sewing.

With spring comes the time to put the kayaks in order. Frames may last for years but it is desirable to renew the covering each season, if there are enough skins. These photographs were taken at Povungnetuk last year when two kayaks were being made, the sewing being done inside a huge tent. Like an old time quilting-bee or barn-raising, the neighbours come round to lend a hand or a set of jaws.





The men finish work on the kayak frame as the owner of the new boat planes the bottom lath.

Inside the big tent the scraped and softened skins are suspended from a horizontal pole while the women join together enough to cover the kayak. Waterproof double seams are neatly sewn with sinew. In old times a bone or ivory needle was used and the thimble, worn on the first finger, was a piece of thick hide.

Needles have to be sharpened as the work proceeds, and there must, of course, be breaks for refreshment and looking after the babies. Then the hostess serves her kayak-sewing bee with ever-popular tea, bannock, and fresh fish.

When the skins have been sewn together, the men drape the cover over the upside-down kayak frame. Then they begin lashing the two sides together across the top, which is now underneath. When enough is done to hold the cover in place, they turn the boat right side up again, to finish the job in comfort.







The opposite edges of the cover are laced together across the top with skinline. The raised cross-piece amidships will form the front of the 'manhole'.



With the sides laced together, the women take over again to sew on the top skins. They are using pieces of cardboard to protect their sleeves from the damp skins but the 'ulu' is still their tool for cutting skins and trimming off flippers.





D. W. Munro photo

Sewing finished, the kayak is turned upside down again and carefully scrutinized for holes that need patching. After a careful overall inspection, the wooden cockpit frame is put in by the men, and the finished kayak is put up on the rack to dry.

TRAIL TO THE BIG BEND

BY R. M. PATTERSON

Photographs by the author, who has travelled through much of British Columbia and written about its past and present.

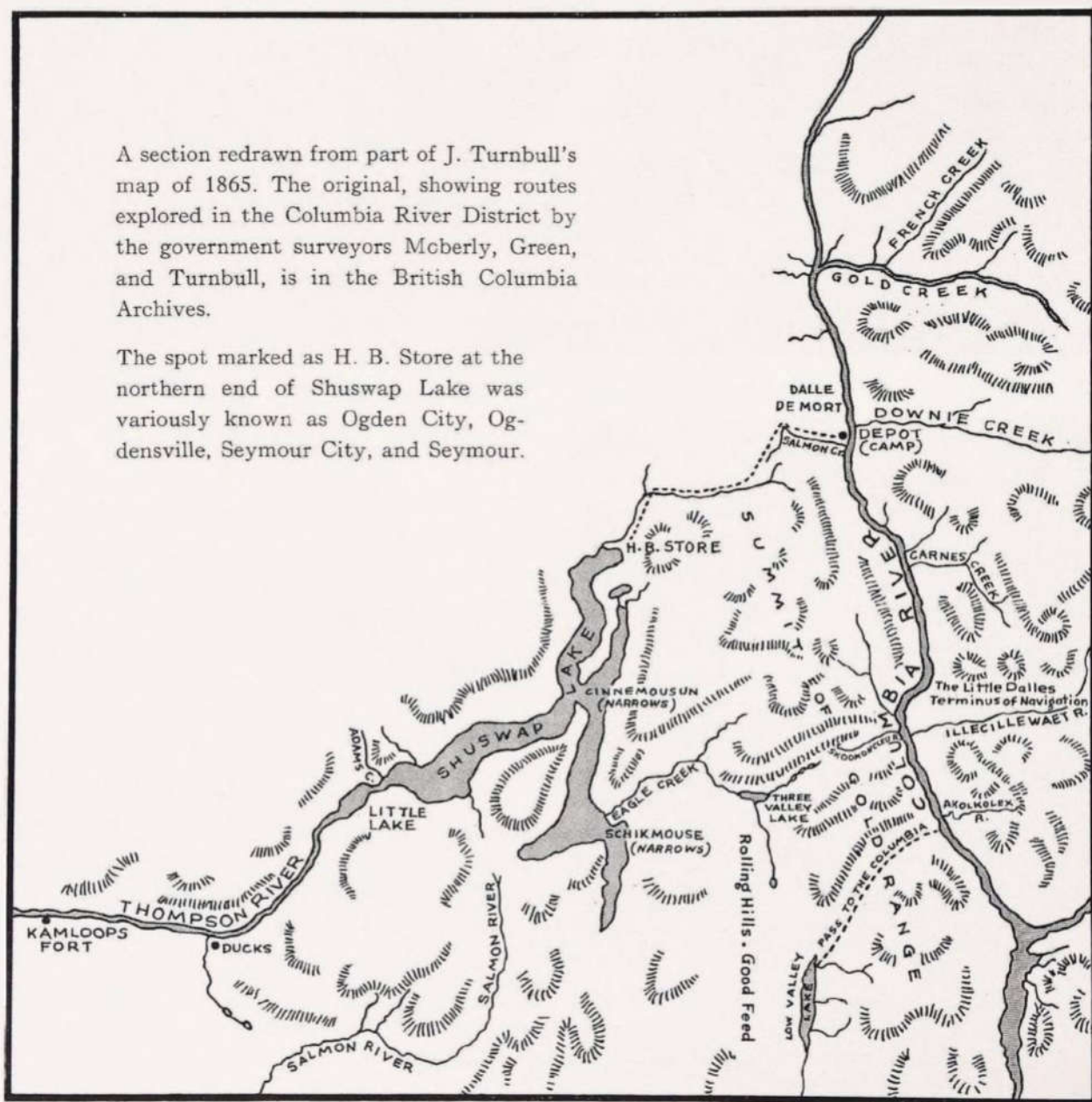
NOBODY seems to know just who started it. But to the prospector far pastures always look green, and since at least as early as 1861 men had been working slowly northwards up the Columbia River, panning as they went, finding enough gold to lure them on. Then rumours began to come from out of that dim forest country—rumours of shallow diggings on the Big Bend. The Northwest was suddenly galvanised into

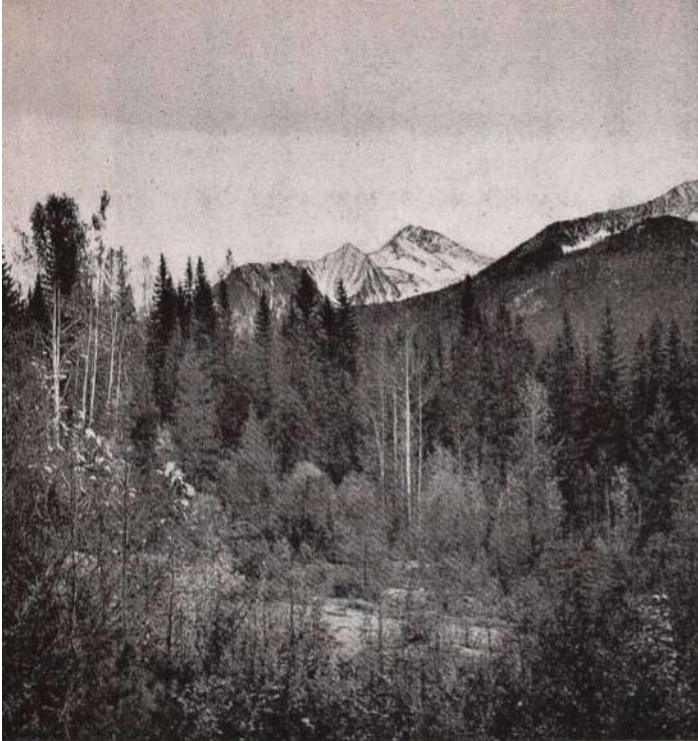
activity: Portland and Victoria each had visions of a golden future in which, for each, the rival city had no share: from Cariboo to California the optimists and the restless ones hit the trail—and by the first months of 1865 the short-lived rush was on.

Forewarned by the increasing activity of the previous four years, the Hudson's Bay Company had already taken steps to secure a share in the new trade; and on

A section redrawn from part of J. Turnbull's map of 1865. The original, showing routes explored in the Columbia River District by the government surveyors McBerly, Green, and Turnbull, is in the British Columbia Archives.

The spot marked as H. B. Store at the northern end of Shuswap Lake was variously known as Ogden City, Ogden-ville, Seymour City, and Seymour.





Goldstream valley, about a quarter mile below the mouth of French Creek, looking east to the Selkirks.

November 14th, 1864, Chief Factor Roderick Finlayson was able to write from Victoria to Chief Trader Joseph Wm. McKay at Kamloops: "... We note that Mr. Martin is stationed for the winter at the East end of Lake Souswap and that you had pre-empted a section of land there for the Company. . . ." Mr. Martin's tenure of office was not a long one: by the summer of 1865 his accounts were in disorder and he was replaced at this post by Mr. Sabiston. The post in question was at the head of the long northern arm of Shuswap Lake, now called the Seymour Arm.

In April 1865 William Downie led a party from Colville in Washington Territory to the Big Bend country. This party included H. C. Carnes, and Downie and Carnes Creeks, powerful streams flowing down from the Selkirks, remain as memorials to these men. At Carnes Creek they discovered gold in paying quantities—"gold in the shape of cucumber seed, coarse and dark-coloured." They pushed on up-river, investigating Goldstream, French and McCulloch Creeks. They found that French Creek gold was "rough, flat and very bright." Late in October they returned south to Washington Territory.

This was only one of many such parties, and from them the most optimistic reports trickled down to Victoria and Portland. *The British Colonist* newspaper of Victoria recorded them all. On 21 September 1865, under the headline "Encouraging News", we read that "... diggings paying \$16 to \$18 a day have been struck." And on 5 October that "A Mr. Baxter of Yale left French Creek on the 19th ult., travelling time from the Columbia River to Yale, six days! Great confidence prevailed, he said. Claims were down to bedrock and there were expecta-

tions of from 30 to 40 oz. a day to the hand. . . . Mr. McCulloch had discovered McCulloch's Creek and expected it to be as rich as French Creek. . . ." In the issue of 30 November there were again "Cheering Reports. The Half Breed Co. (French Creek) is taking out as high as 6 oz. to the pan a few feet from the surface—now 25 to 65 oz. a day." One man, Dupuis, took out \$5,000 on French Creek and then quit. \$500 of this was in a single day. Nuggets were being found on French Creek "of from \$15 to \$20 apiece." Best of all was a report in *The British Columbian*, reprinted in the *Colonist* of 14 December, from a Mr. Richard Edwards "... alias Brother Dick, and just arrived from McCulloch's Creek. We may premise that Mr. Edwards is an honest, cautious miner who will not knowingly exaggerate, and whose every word will be implicitly believed by those who know him. His Clemens Company took out 12 to 35 oz. per day before they quit and on the last day our informant took out \$105 in one pan." The largest nugget found by the Clemens Co. weighed one and a half ounces. French Creek dust, *The Portland Oregonian* tells us, "... assays \$18.50 to the ounce and commands \$17 from the traders."

Somehow or other all this activity had to be supplied with food and other essentials, and the diggings had to be made accessible to incoming miners. Two routes led into the Big Bend country: one from Washington Territory by way of the Columbia River and the Arrow Lakes, and the other by way of Kamloops Lake, the Thompson River and Shuswap Lake, and thence by trail over the Gold Range to the Columbia. The government surveyors, Walter Moberly, with Turnbull and Green, were busy throughout 1865, locating the trail over the Gold Range, surveying a townsite at the head of the Seymour Arm and around the little Hudson's Bay Company post there, and exploring the Eagle Pass through which the C.P.R. now runs; then, as now, the easiest trail from the Shuswap country to the Columbia but too far south to be of much use in this gold rush. Moberly, incidentally, disallowed the H B C pre-emption at the head of the lake, reserving the whole of it for government purposes. The site when surveyed was variously named: it was called Ogden City, and sometimes "Ogdensville . . . so named after the Hudson's Bay Company's factor there" (*Colonist*, 5 October 1865). No trace of this name in connection with this post can be found in the Company's records; and the name which came into general use was that of Seymour, or Seymour City, after Frederick Seymour, then Governor of the Crown Colony of British Columbia.

The surveyors—as is usual with surveyors—had their troubles. Turnbull and Herman, working on the Columbia, became impatient with their Indians who refused to work



A characteristic stretch of good navigation on the Columbia, below Downie Creek, looking north, upriver.

on Sundays. "Last Sunday they attempted to work a bark canoe by themselves, ran their feet through the bottom of the canoe—saved all except some blankets. They are now awaiting the arrival of the Indians, into whose hands they will again have to consign themselves."

The boat builders were busy, too. Throughout the summer of 1865, in an effort to secure the traffic for the American route, Captain White was building his boat, the *Forty-Nine*, at Colville, Washington Territory. It was hoped that she would make her trial trip in September—and then in October. Finally in late November a correspondent of the *Colonist* wrote that she was at last completed. "She was built," he adds, "two miles from the H.B.Co.'s old fort and sixteen miles from the American fort at Colville. All is excitement here, men are leaving every day in small boats for the mines. . . ." In the following day's *Colonist* a miner from Cariboo headed for Blackfoot (in what is now Idaho) describes Colville as "one of the meanest places a man ever got out of, being inhabited chiefly by thieves." According to him the new steamer was nearly finished "and the Colville folks think she will knock the Thompson River route into a cocked hat next spring"—an opinion which was wholeheartedly

shared by the *Portland Oregonian*, which saw fit to add "There is but one objection that can now be urged against Boat Encampment—it is in British Territory."

Meanwhile the Hudson's Bay Company had not been idle. In June, 1865, Chief Trader W. A. Mouatt was ordered to Fort Kamloops to "examine Thompson's River and Suschwap Lakes, ascertaining the facilities on those waters for navigating a Steamboat." His report on the river was favourable—and he also observed that the Company's post at the head of "Suschwap Lake . . . is in a very advantageous position, owing to its proximity to the trail leading over the 'Divide' and also to its being in the neighbourhood of the only large quantity of timber on the Lake. . . ." That is interesting in view of the many good stands of timber existing on the lake today.

Roderick Finlayson, knowing the habits of rivers, wrote again on October 11 to McKay at Kamloops: ". . . before you return to Yale [you are to] examine carefully, the depth of water and the breadth of the channel in the shallowest parts of the river between the Kamloops and Souswap Lakes and report the same to us . . . this examination to be made when the water is at its lowest stage in the River." McKay was also ordered

to secure to the Company the lands pre-empted both at "Savonah ferry" (which was near the outlet of Kamloops Lake) and also at the head of "Souswap Lake". In view of the probably heavy traffic in the spring of 1866 provisions of all kinds were to be accumulated at Kamloops, particularly "potatoes grain and dried fish".

Reports on the low water stage of the Thompson must have been favourable, since the Company went ahead with its plans and had the S.S. *Marten* built that winter at Savona's Ferry by a Mr. Wright. In addition a whole fleet of small boats was constructed on the shores of both the big lakes by private individuals and syndicates.

The trail over the Gold Range from Seymour to the Columbia near Downie Creek was well trodden by this time. It was known as Moberly's Trail; there was good horse feed on the Shuswap slope of the range—nothing much on the Columbia side. In July 1865 the Indians drove thirty to forty head of packhorses across. Smith and Ladner organised a regular pack train service from Seymour to the Columbia. They hired all the Indians they could lay hands on to pack stuff in: twenty Indians started on October 11th with packs of 60 to 100 lb. Ten head of Smith and Ladner beef cattle were met that fall crossing the summit. Today the queerest landmark of all on that long-forgotten trail is a dump of slabs for two pool tables that were somehow struggled in over the pass. What happened? Did some miner, returning broke, bring the news that the bubble had burst *just* as the packers reached the summit with their awkward loads?

From time to time came editorials in *The British Colonist* shouting for *all* the trade "via Yale, Kamloops and Mr. Wrights new steamer," pointing out that the total distance from Victoria was one third less than that from Portland and listing the amenities of travel—the H B C steamer *Labouchere* from San Francisco to Victoria—fast river steamers to Yale—and then "to Savana Ferry, 133 miles, a splendid Government Wagon Road and Comfortable way-side Houses every few miles; over the road travellers can easily walk, or they can ride in Barnard's Fast Four-Horse Stages. From Savana Ferry the Hudson's Bay Co.'s new and swift steamer Marten will run to Ogden City . . . a distance of 111 miles. From Ogden City to the Columbia River, a distance of 34 miles there is an excellent Government Pack Trail."

Everybody did his best to climb on the band-wagon. In the *Colonist* for 15 February 1866 there is a rather pathetic little advertisement: "No one," it says, "should start for these mines without being quite sure that his teeth are in order. F. W. Cave, Dentist, Trounce Alley . . . is still practising his profession at English prices."

In April, 1866, activity became feverish. The lakes were now free of ice. A thousand miners were reported on their way up the Columbia from Colville. Freight from Savona's Ferry to Seymour was 3 cents a pound. "Mr. Steinberger of Yale will start a brewery at Big Bend—the utensils required having already gone forward." Reports came through of new creeks running \$7 to \$9 to the pan. "Cottonwood Smith has discovered a direct

The site of Seymour City, now completely overgrown by the trees, at the head of the Seymour Arm of Shuswap Lake.





The foot of Priest Rapids, beyond which is the Dalle de Mort of Turnbull's map.
The 'Forty-Nine' unloaded at La Porte near Downie Creek several miles below the rapids.

trail from Seymour to French Creek, so cutting off 30 miles from the government trail." (One more "discovery" of this magnitude and the Columbia River would have been flowing direct into Shuswap Lake!)

The *Marten* was launched on the tenth of May, 1866, and spent the next two weeks at Savona's Ferry, installing machinery. She left on her first trip to Seymour on 26 May, and her arrival is vividly described in a letter to the *Colonist* (June 4) from "W.E.O."

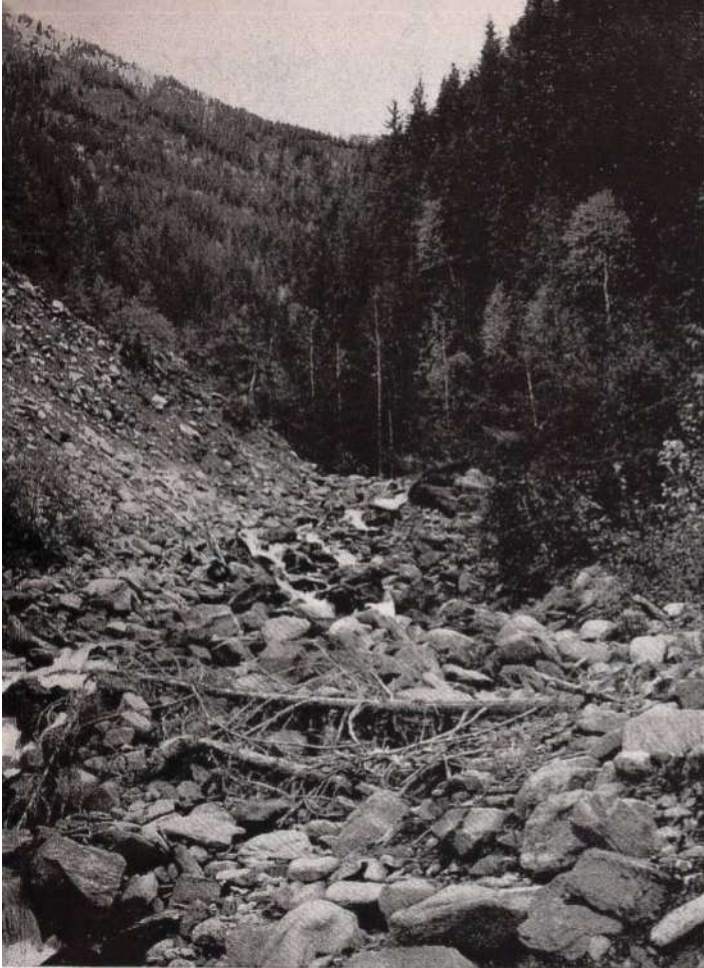
Seymour City. May 27. 1866 "...steamer *Marten* coming round the point and delighting the eyesight of every Seymourite as she... glided through the noble waters of Shuswap Lake. Five hundred hungry pioneers about that time were partaking of their evening dose of beans and bacon, but at the sight of the steamer they hurriedly cast pots and pannikins aside and soon the roar of mighty cannonading was heard emanating from the efforts of the Royal Anvil Artillery.... Every available explosive weapon was brought to bear so that the steamer might receive a hearty welcome. Three rousing cheers and a tiger rent the air...." The passengers responded in kind. Speeches of welcome were made by the Seymourites—but their efforts were as nothing to the response of the commander of the *Marten* who caused

champagne and H B C rum to flow freely for the benefit of all hands on board and of "every individual who stood on the beach." Marvellous days! We shall not see their like again.

A wonderful trip through the beautiful Thompson River country had been enjoyed by all, including the Indians "who were almost frantic at the sight of a steamer and rode furiously along the banks trying to keep up with her."

That was the high point. The stage was now set for a magnificent gold rush; the only fly in the ointment was that the boom had already bust. Already in May, in spite of boosting editorials in the *Colonist*, doubts were arising. Bedrock was deep and on McCulloch Creek it was pitching; the spring was late in that deep snow country. By June the creeks were steadily rising and there were reports of flooding. A letter from French Creek advised miners not to come without four or five hundred dollars "as jawbone [or credit] is pretty well played out."

The *Forty-Nine* was now making her trips to La Porte which was one mile above the mouth of Downie Creek and on the west bank of the Columbia. From there freight was lined up through the rapids to Wilson's Landing and then packed by men or horses to the navigable part of



Narrow gorge where the trail to French Creek crosses McCulloch Creek, which flows into the Goldstream.

Goldstream River. Thence it was taken by canoes and small boats upstream to the mouths of the gold-bearing creeks and once again back-packed by men—in the case of French Creek two miles up to the store. It just simply could not be done; prices were too high and men were leaving the country. The huge piles of waterworn boulders on French Creek remain, mute testimony to the struggles of relays of miners for their hard-worn gold.

Even W.E.O., that confirmed optimist, admits to difficulties. Under the heading "Prospects of the Country" he writes: "Notwithstanding the many disappointed, sore footed, light pocketed . . . bootless and pantless specimens of the *genus homo* returning from Seymour, every one must feel quite satisfied that despite the drawbacks of a very late and severe season, these mines will turn out to be the great Eldorado of British Columbia."

W.E.O.'s account of the town of five hundred, and its buildings which included six saloons, thirteen stores, five bakeries, three restaurants, etc. etc., "to say nothing of a coffee and doughnut stand", is of interest when one has walked over the site. There is nothing there now to mark all this activity, absolutely nothing—just a few holes that once were cellars, the sandy shore and the tall forest trees.

There must have been a Hudson's Bay Company outpost on French Creek, for on 20 September 1866 Roderick Finlayson wrote to Chief Trader James Bissett at Kamloops: "... As Mr. Moffatt's Services are apparently much required . . . at Kamloops, You will please . . . to order him down from French Creek, and send Mr. Milne there to replace him leaving Sabiston for the present in charge at Seymour, where there is but little business now doing. . . ."

And then, a year later, came the end in a letter from Chief Factor W. F. Tolmie to Moffatt at Kamloops, 21 October 1867: Sabiston was ordered to Savona's Ferry, but "First of all however the goods, doors, windows, and every other moveable of any value must be removed from Seymour to Kamloops . . . and let the door and window openings in the building at Seymour be boarded up, as we may yet have use for the establishment, of which, it might be well to give a trusty Indian charge."

The S. S. Marten, after her one spell of glory, proved not to be a paying proposition. Her government subsidy of \$400 a month was discontinued, but she lingered on doing the odd jobs of the district. As late as 1876 she was still on the water, taking Lord and Lady Dufferin from Savona to Kamloops.

The last trip of the *Forty-Nine* for 1866 was made on November 15th from Colville. According to the *Portland Oregonian* only French and McCulloch Creeks had paid anything worth while, and three quarters of the men who came down on that last trip "did so as dead-heads—broke."

Yet some determined spirits stayed on in those deep, snowy valleys of the Selkirks. A letter from French Creek dated Jan. 31, 1867, states that two men on Discovery had taken out 175 oz., but does not say in what time. There were still seventy-five men on French Creek and twelve on McCulloch. "We have had a very jolly Christmas; we can boast of a skating rink, a dance and a French class." There was a "free ball the other night and a very handsome supper. . . . The band was something that might vie with that of the Coldstream Guards, consisting of the following instruments viz guitar, violin (a bully one made on the creek out of soup bouillon tins) tambourine and bones both of home manufacture. . . . The Ball was kept up with great zest until nine o'clock the next morning. All the ladies in town were present, they number two and a half."

That little half-lady of French Creek might have been eight years old on that festive night—when no doubt she slept through the small hours on a pile of the dancers' mackinaws, safely tucked away in a corner, wrapped warmly in her blankets. If she were still alive, she would now be over a hundred, so long ago did all this happen. ♦

QUICK-STEPPING PIONEERS

BY JAMES McCOOK

*Inspector William Parker,
who chased a prisoner 26 miles,
photographed in Regina in 1939.*



WILLIAM Parker, a young Englishman, rode West with the Mounted Police in 1874, endured the hardships and relished the excitement of the frontier, served in the 1885 Rebellion, won promotion by good service—and then saw everything he had gained by endurance, courage and devotion to duty imperilled when a prisoner in his custody jumped from a railway car and ran off over the prairie.

Parker, leaping after the prisoner from the moving train, accepted the sort of challenge the early West so often presented to her sons.

The fleeing horse-thief, wearing moccasins, seemed to flit over the prairie while Parker at first clumped along in his new riding boots. The policeman stopped, pulled off his boots and resumed the pursuit in his socks.

At the end of 26 miles he caught his man.

Imagine the headlines today—"Cop Nabs Runaway After 26-Mile Race" or perhaps "Unmounted Mountie Wins Prairie Race!"

In 1940 Inspector Parker told me that the court before which he took his prisoner showed no interest in the marathon. There was another matter of importance.

"The magistrate said to me, 'Parker, where are your proper boots?' They were sticklers for dress in those days. All I could say was that I had lost them on the path of duty. When I picked them up beside the railway track a few days later the grasshoppers had been at them and they were chewed so badly they could not be worn again."

A man running to keep his seniority in the N.W.M.P. was expected to make a substantial effort and anyway, by the standards of the pioneer West, 26 miles on foot in a day was nothing much.

There were many giants of endurance among the walkers and runners of the West. Consider these:

Thomas Manitou Keesik of Fort Pelly for a reward of rum or tea—preferably rum—would run down a coyote on foot. Isaac Cowie, a Hudson's Bay Company apprentice clerk on the plains before the police arrived, said that Thomas ran after a coyote from Fort Pelly to the Touchwood Hills, about 100 miles. Both fell exhausted many times, then rose to stagger on. In the end Thomas was able to crawl within stabbing distance.

The Rev. Dr. John MacLean, riding among the Plains Indians, travelled with the Stony chief, Bearspaw, who ran alongside the horses all day although they were urged to their utmost effort. Before each rest spell on a 150-mile trip Bearspaw would lengthen his stride and pull ahead. When the riders caught up he would have a fire of buffalo chips burning.

Billy Seymour walked from Fort George to Quesnel and back, 192 miles, in 42 hours.

Billy Loutit pulled a hand sled from Fort Chipewyan to the N.W.M.P. at Fort Smith, 200 miles, in three days.

There's no end to the tales of the trail and if some of them have grown larger beside the campfire, who is to complain? The fact remains that the fur-traders, missionaries, and police had more than common regard for the

Mr. McCook, associate editor of the Ottawa "Journal" developed an interest in sidelights of western history when he was a reporter on the prairies.

truth. The achievements appear all the more attractive when it is understood boasting was not encouraged around the posts.

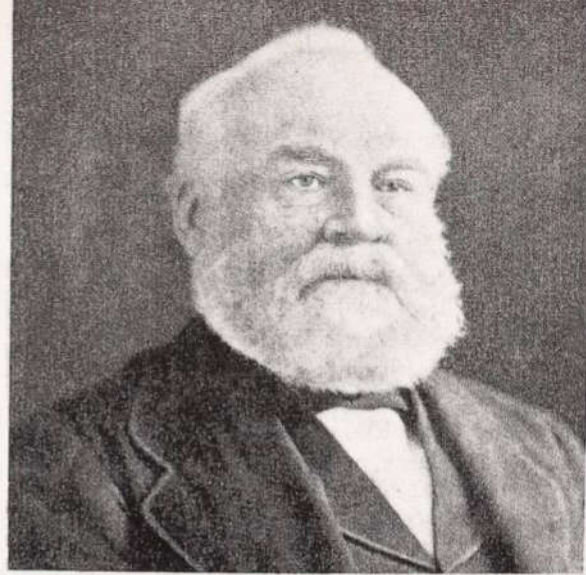
The hardy spirit of the West was well exemplified by Donald Matheson and James Short who walked through deep snow for six days, the last three without food, to reach Fort Pitt. The Earl of Southesk, who had employed them as guides in 1859, recorded with pride that when they reached Fort Pitt after this ordeal in the snow "they talked in the most cheerful manner about other things until asked by Mr. Chastellain if they would have something to eat."

It would have been a proud footnote to Western history if they had said they were not hungry.

In the same nothing-to-it spirit, Chief Factor Dr. John Rae travelled the North on foot as lightly burdened and confidently as any Eskimo. In 1837 he is reported to have walked the 100 miles between Moose Factory and Albany on snowshoes in one day, the hours not reported. Years afterwards he was visiting Hamilton, Ontario, and decided to snowshoe to Toronto for dinner, completing the 40 miles in seven hours and enjoying his meal.

There was, of course, a contrariness among the fur-traders that might make them want to walk even if other transport were available. On 6 September, 1852, Chief Factor Robert Campbell left Fort Selkirk on the Pelly River in the Yukon for England, which he reached on 18 April, 1853. He had a canoe for a limited distance on the way to Fort Simpson on the Mackenzie where he took to snowshoes for the long tramp to Fort Garry. There he paused briefly to restore himself for a further tramp to Crow Wing on the Mississippi where he could take ship to the coast. At Crow Wing he calculated that he had covered 3,000 miles on foot. It is hard to believe that he could not have arranged for a dog sled lift or the use of a horse somewhere along the route. You can see his pride in his walking prowess growing with every step South.

The Eastern Canadian soldiers who went West in the 1885 Rebellion soon found out that shanks' mare would be their transport. At Clarke's Crossing, General Sir



Chief Factor W. J. Christie made a 2,000-mile dogteam journey in 55 days.

Frederick Middleton, commander of the forces, welcomed the 10th Regiment Royal Grenadiers from Toronto, 250 strong. They had only a few wagons and had marched 198 miles over wet and heavy trails in nine days, including one day's halt. It was, said Middleton, who was seldom generous in his praise of Canadians, "a highly creditable performance for men quite unaccustomed to long marching."

When they could do so much with their own feet, imagine what the pioneers could do with horses!

In what is known as the "horse age" recently gone, 50 to 60 miles on one mount was considered a day's ride. From 80 to 100 miles was notable. In 1862 Private William Sturgis of the U.S. Army made an outstanding ride. (U.S. histories call it an "epic") by carrying news of the Minnesota Massacre from Fort Ridgely to Fort Snelling—165 miles in 18 hours.

Sergeant Horner of the N.W.M.P. rode the 112 miles from Fort Macleod to Calgary between sun-up and sun-down in summer on the horse Caesar. Dr. L. G. DeVeber, later a member of the Senate, was at Fort Macleod when he received an urgent message to attend a patient at Morley, 40 miles West of Calgary. He covered the 187 miles in 18 hours, changing horses four times.

The N.W.M.P. at Maple Creek were not in the least put out when they received a message from Lady Macdonald at Ottawa saying that she would like to visit the grave of her nephew, Superintendent E. Dalrymple Clarke, who died in 1880 at Fort Walsh. She observed she would have only seven hours to spare between trains.

The train stopped at Maple Creek, 35 miles from Fort Walsh, and the police democrat was waiting with the inspector at the reins. Seven hours later, 70 miles covered and a reverent visit to the grave completed, the democrat was back at the Maple Creek station where, an observer noted, "the outriders were no longer red riders but two sweat and dust-covered figures hardly recognizable."



Arthur Haddock, Yukon stage driver of 1904, photographed in Ottawa in 1953.

In contrast to these hard journeys there is the story of the gentle Willow Bunch giant, Edouard Beaupre, born in what is now Southern Saskatchewan in 1883 and eight feet, two inches tall and 378 pounds when full grown.

He loved to ride but it is recorded of him that when his horse toiled up a hill he would take his feet from the stirrups and walk without dismounting, his long legs allowing him to reach the ground from the saddle.

Even in the Yukon, where 3,000 horses died in the anguish of the White Pass journey in 1897, the operators of the stage run over the 330 miles from Whitehorse to Dawson City imported the best hay and grain for horses stabled after 20-mile stages in which 20-below weather was common in winter and 60 below not unusual. Arthur Haddock, who drove this route in 1904, said that his horses were kept in good shape and often, he thought, had more sense than his passengers.

Fifty years afterward he recalled with satisfaction one stubborn cheechako who insisted on sticking his head out the window on an extraordinarily cold drive at 72 below. The stage had reached the Yukon River and the horses, knowing a warm stable and timothy hay awaited them in the valley, went down the road at full speed. The stranger stuck out his head and his nose was quickly frozen "and split like a carrot," said Mr. Haddock with grim glee.

Enduring horses were loyal comrades of enduring men. In 1883 Constable Charles Parker was caught in a blizzard near Fort Macleod and had his clothing soaked by a fall in a river. The next day he was snow blind. His horse stayed by him day and night for a week and he was found by the mail driver from Fort Benton, helpless in the saddle beside the trail where the horse had taken him. Only the tips of his ears had to be amputated.

The Bow River mail carrier in 1879 did not have such a sturdy companion. His horse gave out 70 miles north of Calgary and he left it behind and started to walk. He became snow blind but staggered on. He was three days without food and two nights without fire but when he felt ice under his feet guessed he had reached Nose Creek which he followed until he reached the Bow River at Calgary.

The more the Western and Arctic stories are examined the more impressive is the fact that what we would consider extreme privation was taken for granted. Inspector F. H. French, who was on the 1917 Arctic patrol which sought the Eskimos who killed Radford and Street, reported after the first 2,483 miles:

"It has been the hardest trip I have ever made, and we suffered much from cold and exposure. These we felt all the more when our supplies ran out and when towards

the end of our journey our deerskin clothing got the worse for wear and the hair started falling out and the wind pierced through the seams and holes.

"Most of us were continually frozen about the face and hands . . . We were suffering from snow blindness more or less during the whole journey."

There was always the unexpected.

Dr. William MacKay, who had arrived at York Factory with the HBC in 1864, skated 200 miles to Edmonton to supply medical care urgently required there.

In 1895 the *Saskatchewan Times* reported that E. J. Coster had returned to Prince Albert from Saskatoon "coming in on the new bicycle route and doing his 108 miles in nine hours. This is pretty fast time, considering the amount of sand to be got through on the trail".

The tales of heroic dog-team journeys are legion. John McDonald and Sam York allowed themselves 5½ days to take the winter packet from Norway House to York Factory, 400 miles.

Joseph McDonald drove his team 400 miles in six days, and 100 miles to Lac Ste. Anne in one day. Chief Factor William J. Christie took 55 days for the 2,000-mile journey from Fort Simpson to Fort Garry in 1873.

Notable journeys were made by experienced travellers who imposed discipline on themselves and their companions, if any. John Macoun, the naturalist, and his party were 30 hours without water on the prairie in the summer of 1880 because the man responsible failed to fill the water barrel and others did not notice this neglect. Macoun, who had suffered much hardship on other journeys, had no sympathy. He relieved his thirst by opening a tin of tomatoes and drinking the juice. Those who had failed in their responsibility went thirsty.

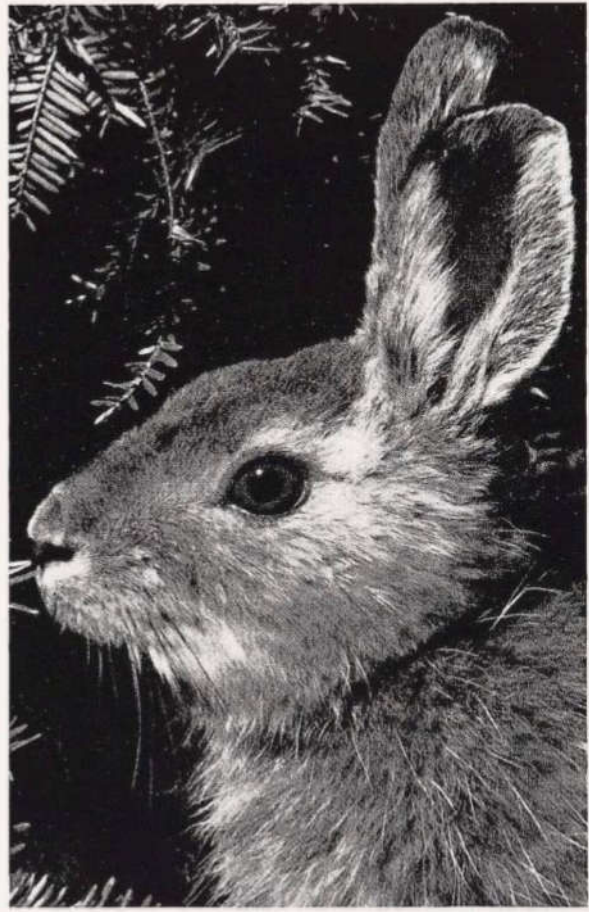
Then there were tireless eccentrics, none more unusual than Yankee Perry whose travels were reported by Dr. W. B. Cheadle:

He walked across much of the United States to the Pacific Coast trundling a wheelbarrow with his possessions. He had covered 2,000 miles when he reached Sacramento but soon tired of California and returned to Minnesota penniless and carrying only his gun and ammunition.

At Breckenridge, Minnesota, he borrowed an axe, shaped a tree into a canoe and paddled 700 miles on the Red River to Fort Garry where, headed west again, he tramped 500 miles to Fort Carlton. There he was hired to drive a cart to Edmonton. Then he walked over the mountains to the Cariboo where he worked a good claim until he found the man next to him was taking out twice as much gold.

Perry kicked his rocker and pick into the river and left in disgust. For all anyone knows, he's walking yet. ♦

SPRING CHANGE



Twice a year the varying hare changes its coat, from the white fur that sees it through the long winter months to the brown of summer and then back again.

Photographs and notes by Leonard Lee Rue III

THE days grow shorter, the weather colder and the snow begins to fall. The snowshoe hare sits snug in his form or lair beneath the spruce tree and awaits the coming of the evening's darkness under whose cover he will venture forth to feed. A twig snaps and instantly the hare is alert. His nose twitches as it screens the air for some tell-tale scent. His whiskers sweep back and forth like radar antennae. At last, the breeze carries to him the odour of a red fox out searching for food. By this time the hare's ears can even hear the footfalls of the fox in the soft snow and he learns that the fox, although passing closely, is on an angle away from him. The hare "freezes" and remains virtually invisible, his white pelage blending perfectly with the snow.

Why does the varying hare (*Lepus americanus*) turn white? How? Is it the cold or the snow itself that causes this transformation? Man has long been puzzled over this and it has only been recently that scientific knowledge has shed a little light on the subject.

It used to be believed that the coming of the snow caused the hares to turn white, but in mild winters even when the snows were late or there was only a light fall, the hares turned white anyway. This, anyone could observe. The same applied to the cold.

The real key seemed to be in the days growing shorter. This has now been proved to be the answer. The amount of light falling on the photocells of the eye is transmitted to the portion of the brain that controls the endocrine glands. As the light lessens, the glands become more inactive which in turn retards the use of pigment in the hair.

The hair does not turn white; it is shed and replaced with new white hair in the autumn. This shedding does not take place over night. It is a gradual transformation which takes place rapidly in the Arctic but quite slowly farther south where it may take from two to three months to complete.

In the spring, the whole pattern is reversed with the lengthening of the daylight hours. Many experiments have been performed whereby hares have been kept white all summer by keeping them in darkened pens. In other tests by increasing the amount of light each day, by electric bulbs, the hares have been made to turn brown in the middle of the winter and to breed in the months of December and January.

Most of the breeding instincts are also controlled by "light hours." This also is the trigger that sets off migrations of birds and animals. Crows, subjected to increased light throughout the fall months, flew north when released in the middle of the winter, instead of heading south.

On the whole, the hare's white pelage is a most efficient form of camouflage, although it sometimes works in reverse

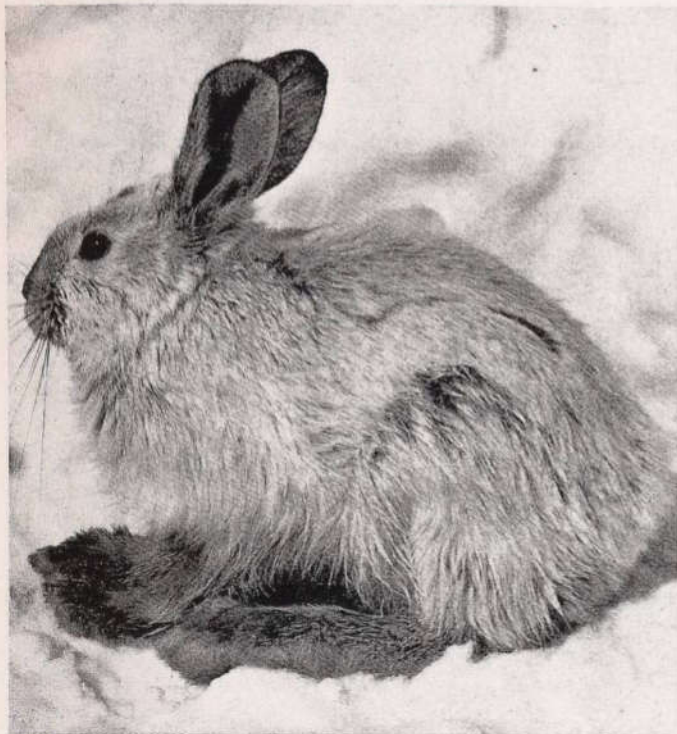


The long legs and large feet of the winter-clad varying hare are conspicuous in this view. The air-filled cells in the white hairs, as in white feathers (as opposed to the dark grains in coloured hairs and feathers) provide insulation.

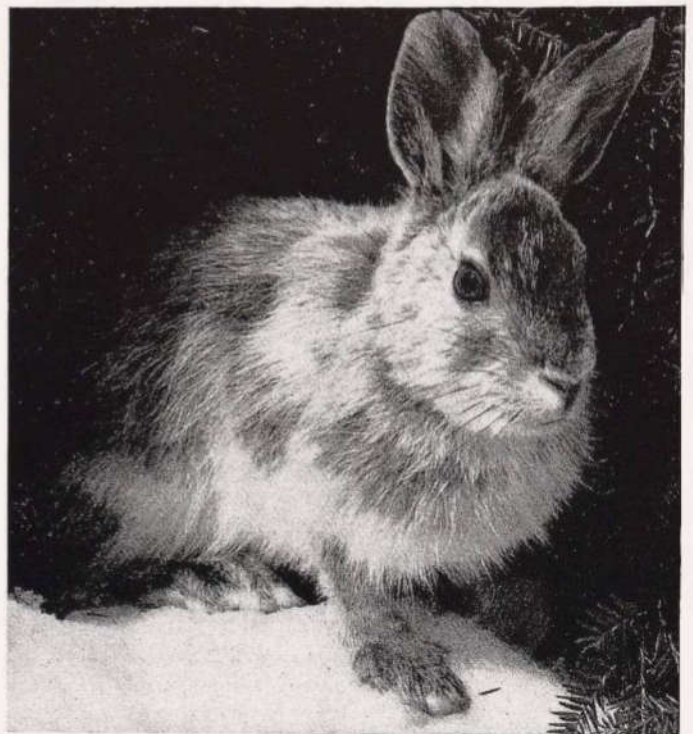
when the snows fall late or melt early. At such times, the hares can be seen at a great distance where they stand out like the proverbial "sore thumb."

The northernmost arctic hares (*Lepus arcticus*) are white all year round while some of the southern species remain brown. Besides the camouflage value, white hair is more efficient than dark as it allows less of the body's heat to reflect outward where it would be lost. The northern hare's body is more compact than his southern counterpart because this too allows less heat loss and is more efficient. In addition to all these advantages, the hare's large hind feet become even larger each fall when longer stiff hairs double the foot size. These effective pads, which give him his name of snowshoe hare (often called rabbit) allow the hare to traverse soft snow where other creatures bog down.

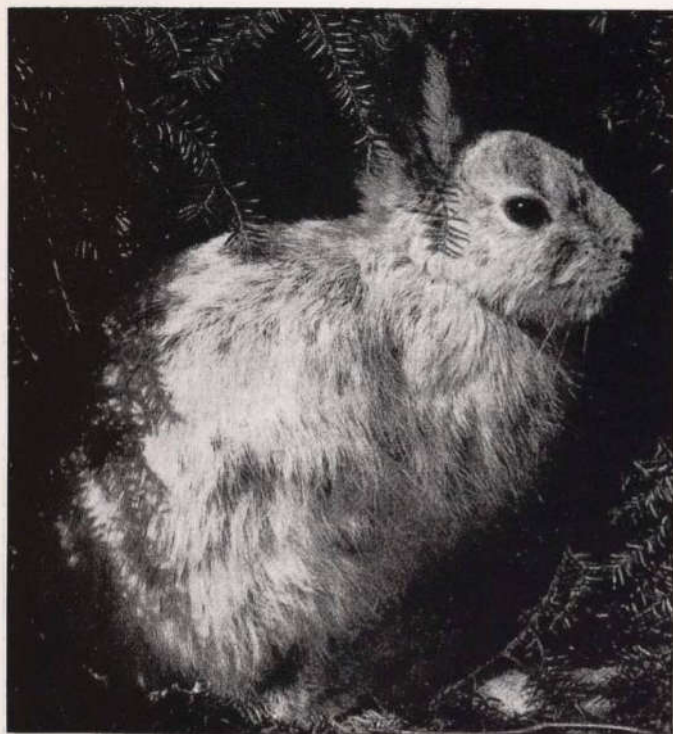
All in all, this hare is ideally fitted to live under the conditions in which he has been placed and cared for by a provident nature, and he has been placed all over Canada.



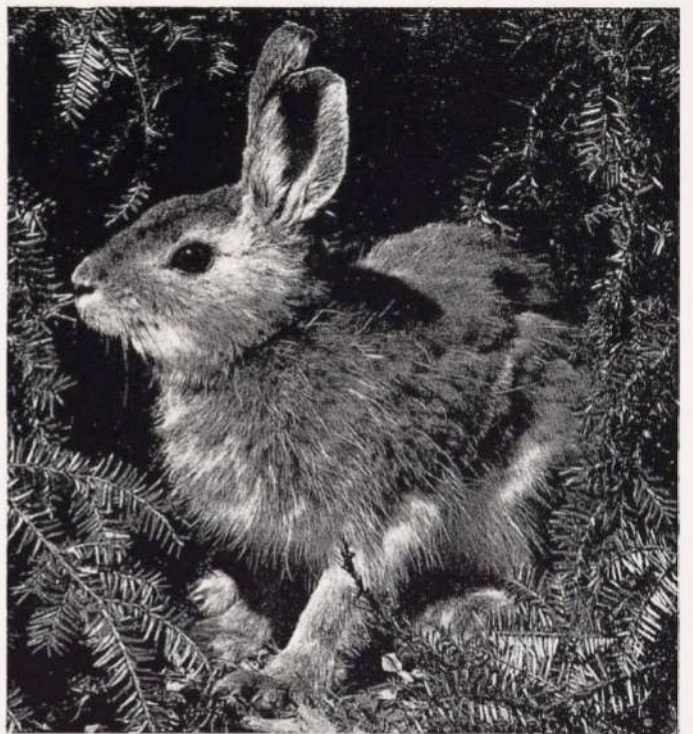
Hairy 'snowshoes' enable it to stay on top of any kind of snow.



Underparts are still white but back sprinkled with new brown hairs.



The snow has almost gone but the hare has only partially completed its moult.



The snowshoe hare, with pads reduced to normal size, alert in summer fur of greyish-brown.

SQUIRE SOWDEN'S OPERA HOUSE

BY JEAN SANGWINE

Among the interests of Mrs. Sangwine, Manitoba free-lance, are music and local pioneer history.

INVITE the average resident of a western town in for an evening of operatic records and he will probably tell you he prefers hoc-down. Ask his opinion of the *Gotterdammerung* and he will suspect you of profanity. Which goes to point out that prairie towns seldom encourage their citizens to develop a knowledge and love of the world of opera. Some sixty years ago things were rather different, for touring companies barnstormed across the country, playing in many an unlikely hall or courtesy-titled "theatre." In this respect, the town of Souris (30 miles southwest of Brandon, Manitoba, pop. 1,745) lays

unique claim to an edifice known as the "Sowden Opera House" which furnished entertainment for the community at the same time that singers like Caruso and Galli-Curci inspired the Golden Age at New York's Metropolitan.

The Souris Opera House was built by Squire W. H. Sowden, a rugged pioneer who played a lively role in the early history of the town. As a member of a colonization syndicate from Millbrook, Ontario, the squire first came west in 1880. He had already reached 57 years of age but did not object to scouring the prairies alone with his pony and buckboard in search of a likely spot for a colony of



The players who performed "H.M.S. Pinafore" in the Sowden Opera House in 1913. Prof. Racine is standing in the orchestra pit and the other producer, Prof. Thornborough is the Captain.



Part of Souris main street at the turn of the century. The Opera House is the upper part of the building where the horse stands.

Photographs by M. Jacobson



settlers. When a site on the Souris River attracted his fancy, he returned to Ontario and led his band forth the following year.

Today, residents of the Souris district place their pilgrimage on a par with the voyage of the *Mayflower*. The prairies west of Winnipeg were covered with a vast expanse of water that spring, and the settlers became so discouraged that one man got a piece of rope and threatened to hang the Squire for bringing them to such a forsaken country. Fortunately, Mr. Sowden contrived to be absent when morale ran low, and when the travellers finally arrived at Souris and saw the fine land he had chosen for them, they forgot their grievances and turned to the business of building a flourishing community.

The Squire prospered along with the rest of the settlers. He became a successful grain farmer and also operated a large piggery, which discriminating citizens thought was rather too close to the edge of town. He ingeniously built a long swinging bridge across the Souris River so that he could sell land he owned on the far side as lots. At an age when he might have contemplated retirement he owned and operated a brick-yard, an elevator, and a private curling rink. And in 1892, along with his other varied enterprises, he built a theatre block, and designated the second story of the structure the "Sowden Opera House."

Squire W. H. Sowden who went west at the age of 57 to found a town.



Still in use, the swinging bridge built at Souris by Squire Sowden is 582 feet long.

The building apparently drew its name from the style of architecture. Ascending the outdoor stairs which ran up the side of the building, the visitor found himself in an auditorium which seated about 500 people and claimed to be one of the finest halls in the West for its day. At one end of the hall, a well-equipped stage provided accommodation for travelling dramatic companies which were popular at that time, and to the rear a lounge and smoking-rooms offered relaxation between acts. But the original feature of the hall was a series of private boxes which completely filled the three gallery sides of the auditorium.

Credit for the design of these opera boxes is given to the Squire's English daughter-in-law whom one old-timer describes as a very "ladyfied" sort of person. The boxes were rented out by the season (at a tidy profit to the Squire) to leading families of the town, Mr. Sowden reserv-

ing the large right-hand front compartment for himself. Many citizens recall that it was a fine sight indeed to see the townspeople arrive at local functions in the early days, the ladies wearing evening gowns and the men in formal dress.

For forty years the Opera House was the centre of social life in the community. Not that the social life consisted entirely of opera-going—good gracious, no! As a matter of fact the Hall was opened in 1892 with a musical variety concert, a type of entertainment which has remained popular in rural communities throughout the years. The program included hit tunes of the day like "Old Folks at Home," "Annie Laurie," and "Grandma's Story." The audience greeted every participant with typical small-town enthusiasm, Mr. Sowden graciously donated the Hall free of charge, and the proceeds went to the hospital fund.

Later on there were travelling plays. It is recorded that in 1895 the Fraser Dramatic Company played no less than a four-night stand and high tribute was paid to these actors. Then there were vaudeville shows, travelling musicians, visiting celebrities like Helen Keller and Nellie McClung, magicians who made pigeons come out of a hat, and best remembered of all, "Professor A" (the hypnotist) who put several husky young men to sleep on the platform.

Of course there were church dinners. Recalled with special relish were those at the turn of the century which featured wild goose on the menu. Five men of the congregation, including the preacher, went out and shot 105 geese on the first of these occasions. The ladies of the congregation plucked the birds for the feathers, the town baker cooked them, and they were delivered to the table in delectable condition; quarts of liquid fat had been poured on the ground for they were oily birds and anyway gravy could not be served at the tables. The dinners became a popular annual event to which people drove ten and twelve miles with horse and buggy, until in 1901 the hall proved altogether too small to hold them.

There was another dinner which some old-timers remember with considerable amusement. This was the night the townspeople undertook to feed the farmers of the district. For miles around the hungry farmers flocked to town, filled the hall to overflowing and queued up outside to wait their turns. The food proved entirely inadequate to satisfy their hearty appetites and the dismayed townspeople hurriedly sent to the cafe below the hall for extra sandwiches. The sandwiches melted away before the onslaught of the farmers and when the last man was finally filled, the citizens of the town reckoned up such a staggering bill to the cafe-owner that they never dared issue a blanket invitation to the farmers of the district again.

Highly popular in any community were plays staged by the local citizens themselves. One of these bore the intriguing title *Ten Knights in a Bar Room*, and it was said the players supported their parts with confidence and abandon. Other dramas were of a serious nature with the hero or heroine dying at the end. The tragedy of a young Englishman named Harry Greenwood has earned a special niche in the memoirs of the town. As Harry lay struggling for his dying breath, he brought forth an unsolicited titter from the audience as he gasped "Hair, hair, I need hair."

Sowden Opera House had adopted the more prosaic caption of "Sowden Hall" (or sometimes "the Adanac") before an opera was actually performed within its walls. It was in 1913 that Professor Thornborough, vocalist, and Professor Racine, local music teacher who had toured South America with a Gilbert and Sullivan troupe, collaborated on the production of *H.M.S. Pinafore*. The cast

of 31 players performed before an enthusiastic audience for two consecutive nights and also rented a special train to go on tour and perform 50 miles away.

Pinafore was followed by the *Mikado* in 1914 and on this occasion the Squire's daughter Daphne proved to be the surprise of the evening as she won the audience with a contralto voice of "wonderful sweetness."

A local cast staged a repeat performance of *Pinafore* in 1923 and wound up operatic activities a few years later with *All at Sea*, a production which combined themes and plots of five well-known operettas in one Gilbert and Sullivan extravaganza.

The operettas were ably accompanied by Professor Racine's eleven-piece concert orchestra which enjoyed a high reputation throughout the surrounding countryside in those days. If the pace of a performance ever faltered there was always a chance that the curtain which worked on a pulley and came down much more easily than it rolled up, would become temperamental and add to the excitement. People remember too, events like the time the minister who was playing the part of Ralph Rackstraw, announced "In such a company anything could happen," and immediately every light in the house went out. And no one would want to deny that these performances were considerably more appealing because people enjoyed seeing the lady down the street play the heroine in her neighbour's arms, and knowing that the villainous Dick Deadeye was actually a genial farmer who lived a mile out of town.

In the 30s, after housing over four decades of entertainment, Sowden Hall began to show the ravages of time. The old floor swayed so badly when dances were held that plates bounced right off the shelf in the Chinese restaurant below, and mothers feared their daughters would one night promenade right through the ceiling. Eventually the building was condemned as a fire trap.

Squire Sowden died in 1907 at the age of 82. An unnamed admirer, writing to the local paper at the time of his death, pointed to the scores of early pioneers who attended Mr. Sowden's funeral and suggested that the erection of a "drinking fountain for men and animals in some central part of the town" would be a fitting tribute to one who had played a leading role in opening up the West.

The memorial was never built. But half a century after his death, the Squire's name shows little sign of fading from the memory of the community he helped found. The historic swinging bridge he built 57 years ago still spans the Souris River and citizens of the town point to it with pride. And though the Opera House no longer exists, old-timers scattered throughout the province still like to while away a pleasant hour of an evening chuckling over good times they had in Sowden Hall. ♦

NORTHERN BOOKS

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE AMONG THE NORTHERN OJIBWA

by R. W. Dunning

University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1959. XIV, 217 pages. \$5.50.

Reviewed by T. F. McIlwraith

MUCH has been written about the Ojibwa; by historians concerning their early contact with explorers and traders; by anthropologists in reconstructing their native culture and adjustment; and by novelists who saw in them the epitome of the "dusky hunters of the northern forests." But though many facets of Ojibwa life are well known, as a tribe they have remained to a great extent not understood, or even misunderstood, by most white Canadians.

Dunning approaches the Ojibwa, more specifically the Pekangikum band in northwestern Ontario, purely as a social anthropologist. First as a summer teacher while an undergraduate at the University of Toronto, and later as a full-time field ethnologist while working for his Ph.D. at Cambridge, he learnt to know the people, to understand their way of life, and to investigate their activities through the well-directed spectacles of the new school of British social anthropology. Fully aware of historical data, Dunning includes relevant material from early sources. But his theme is not Ojibwa prehistoric culture, or even what existed at the time of contact; it is their life today and the changes of the last seventy-five years which have produced this. Trader, missionary, and government official are all integral parts of modern Pekangikum life, and Dunning rightly includes them in his study. He deals with income and documents his findings with statistics on profits from trapping over the years, showing clearly the economic changes which have taken place. His treatment of demography follows the same pattern, and is marked with the same use of detail to substantiate his conclusions on the increasing concentration of population in recent time. Particularly interesting are his findings on the actual size of the winter hunting groups and of the mutual aid between kinsmen controlled by ecological factors. Dunning shows that the Ojibwa have a precise code of behaviour between individuals on a basis of kinship and

marriage relationship, of a complexity undreamt of by earlier writers.

Everyone knows that Ojibwa, like all other Indians, and indeed like all mankind, are in transition. But there have been few comparable studies of how this change is taking place. Dunning's investigations have been made with only one objective, scientific accuracy. But they provide data on the effects of trade, of social welfare, of an expanding way of life—data which provide a basis for administrative policy. Dunning shows himself a skilled investigator, with a sensitive (but not a sentimental) feeling for "his people." He is one of the many young Canadians who took advantage of the opportunities offered by D.V.A. after the war, who went from Canada to England for post-graduate work and who, returning home, has already enriched our scholarship. I am proud of this work of a former student.

Professor McIlwraith is head of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Toronto.

THE DESPERATE PEOPLE

by Farley Mowat

Little, Brown & Co., Toronto.
305 pages. \$5.00.

Reviewed by Doug Wilkinson

IN 1952 a new book by a new writer made headlines in Canada and the U.S.A. This was *People of the Deer* by Farley Mowat. At that time both the people of the deer and Farley Mowat were almost unknown in Canada, so much so that some authorities denied the existence of such a group of Eskimos and wished they could do the same for Mr. Mowat. But a combination of beautiful writing, a story well told, and endless controversial publicity made *People of the Deer* a best seller, and made Farley Mowat's name a household word in Canada.

Today if you were to inject the name 'Farley Mowat' into a conversation among northerners most likely the result would be a chilly silence followed by an abrupt change in the conversation to something more pleasant. For Mr. Mowat has committed the unpardonable sin of criticizing all the institutions of the north in such a way that his methods have been described by a member of the

Northwest Territories Council as "attacking vigorously and with utter indiscrimination the good faith and integrity of four classes of people in the north: the missionary, the policeman, the civil servant and the trader."

In *The Desperate People* Mr. Mowat continues his attack on these four classes of people in the north. As a result the mention of his name will still bring shudders from many northerners. But let this not obscure the fact that *The Desperate People* is basically a story about Eskimos, about a small group in the interior barrens country which, through neglect and indifference on the part of missionary, policeman, civil servant, and trader, has almost vanished from the face of the earth. Mr. Mowat puts on record the story of this group living inland from the west coast of Hudson Bay, spelling out in much detail and backing up his story with material from a number of reliable sources, the tragic tale of a primitive people in decline, unable to cope with situations over which they had no control, with no way of understanding what was happening to them, with no one to turn to in time of need.

Mr. Mowat is a writer and he is superb in his craft. His descriptions of events and re-enactments of conversations that must have taken place are beautifully done. The flow of the story from the early history of these inland Eskimos (as interpreted by Mr. Mowat) to the tragic events of more recent times carries the reader along with mounting interest, tension and, finally, despair. For *The Desperate People* is a book about death—death by starvation and cold on the great white plains of the northern tundra. I don't think anyone who reads this book will ever be free of the haunting spectre of the Eskimo woman, Kikik, half starved and frozen, driving and dragging her five children through the bitter cold of midwinter in a last attempt to find food and shelter.

It is possible to pick a few errors in fact in Mr. Mowat's narrative; it is possible to differ with him on his interpretation of fact relating to the early history of this group of people; it is possible to say that Mr. Mowat is not completely objective in his viewpoint, that he attributes too much to the Eskimos and too little to the whites. But these are minor matters in the face of the full strength of the book as a powerful

and evocative story detailing the last days of a primitive people.

In commenting on *The Desperate People* a high government official has urged all Canadians to read this book for "the tragedy of these people is something that no one can deny and that no Canadian can ignore in full conscience." Unfortunately I don't think many Canadians will follow this advice and read *The Desperate People*. For it is a story of man's inhumanity to man set in Canada in the present century. I think that most of us will not want to be reminded (if we already know) or to be told (if we don't know) that, during a period of mounting prosperity in our land, men, women and children starved and froze to death through the neglect and indifference of our government and ourselves, who should have known.

Author and film-maker, Doug Wilkinson has a background of many years in the Arctic and life with the Eskimos.

THE NATURAL THING

by Pieter W. Fosburgh

Brett-Macmillan Ltd., Galt.
255 pages. \$4.75.

Reviewed by Clarence Tillenius

GILBERT Highet, in his admirable book "The Art of Teaching" recounts how in Marshal Foch's conferences with his generals and allies, the staff-meetings sometimes developed (as conferences often do) into meaningless wrangles. Foch would in silence take a large sheet of paper and on it print in capitals "What is the problem?" Within minutes, irrelevant issues were thrust aside and a solution forthcoming.

Conservation is a thorny subject, not least of its problems being in getting a clear public understanding of what exactly it means. Probably half the fire and heat generated in arguments about it would not arise if the antagonists understood clearly what they were discussing.

A clear and forthright statement of what the aims of conservationists are, and how they go about putting them into effect is contained in this book by Pieter W. Fosburgh. Fosburgh, for 10 years editor of the New York State Conservation Department, discusses with frankness and humour questions of urgency for us in Canada no less than in the U.S.

Indeed parts of this book might well be required reading for sportsmen and nature lovers, laymen and administrators. It must often be the experience of administrators that the public resists strongly some measure which, if they only understood it, is in their own best interest. Resistance and antagonism is then a direct result of the public not having been

made aware of what the measure is intended to accomplish. This may often be due to a department's lack of funds or personnel.

Sportsmen particularly and nature enthusiasts generally may ask themselves whether they might not at their own expense set up some means by which they would be made acquainted with the ever-expanding body of case histories of successful (and unsuccessful) conservation experiments: why they were tried, why they failed or succeeded in their particular district. Without such knowledge, arguments are largely "sound and fury, signifying nothing."

There is much in this book which a brief review cannot touch on. However, the story of how the author and his brother acquired and set about reclaiming a run-down wilderness estate, the many essays on personalities in the outdoor field and wildlife generally, are full of interest. Disarmingly simple and straightforward is the author's style: reading, one has a sense of personal acquaintance with a friendly and convincing personality.

Mr. Tillenius, artist and naturalist, is well known for his animal studies.

HIGHWAY OF DESTINY

by J. P. Bertrand

The Vantage Press, N.Y. 299 pages.
\$4.50.

Reviewed by George F. G. Stanley

IN 1944 the second volume of the American Lakes series, *Lake Superior*, by Grace Nute, was published. In this book Dr. Nute kept her eyes pretty much upon the American scene, just as her publisher had his upon the American reading public. Not that she ignored the Canadian shore of Lake Superior, but rather that she wrote about the Lake south of the international boundary with greater assurance and greater emphasis. Now, fifteen years later, another book on Lake Superior has appeared, J. P. Bertrand's *Highway of Destiny*. The second book makes good the deficiencies of the first and presents the history of the greatest of the Great Lakes from a Canadian point of view. Thus, each book complements the other.

One of the interesting things about the author of *Highway of Destiny* is that he is a historian by avocation only. A lumberman turned historian in his later years, a native of the Ottawa valley with a real love for the Lakehead, a French Canadian who chooses to write in the English language, Mr. Bertrand has produced a regional history that carries the reader through the heroic days of the early explorers and *coureurs de bois*, the establishment of the first posts on the Nipigon

and Kaministiquia rivers, the rivalries of the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies, and the changing economy of the region from furs, to minerals, to timber. It is a good story, and one well worth telling.

And the author has something to tell. He presents convincing evidence that Du Lhut constructed a fort just up the mouth of the Kaministiquia, and that he did so in 1679, not in 1678 which has so often been suggested as the date. He also locates this fort as well as that built by La Noue in 1717. Even more significant is his account of the capture of Fort William by Lord Selkirk in 1816. There is no denying that Mr. Bertrand does not like Lork Selkirk and that he wears his affection for the Nor'Westers upon his sleeve. But he has relied for his information upon one of Selkirk's own men, Lieutenant Friedrich von Graffenried, the officer who commanded the noble lord's personal bodyguard. Von Graffenried's journal has been neglected by those Canadian historians who have dealt with the Selkirk story; probably because it was written in German and because copies of it are extremely rare.

One picture which emerges from the later pages of this book—and one not deliberately painted by the author—is the pattern, in broad outline, of Canadian economic development: the discovery and development of Canadian natural resources, initially by Canadians and then, once these resources have been proven to exist and the risk thereby reduced, their exploitation by American capitalists. Such has been the story of the oil industry in our own day—such was the history of the silver mines in North Western Ontario in the seventies and eighties.

But if the book necessarily deals with economic history, that is not to say that it is full of graphs and statistics. On the contrary. It is doubtful if the economic historian will really find in Mr. Bertrand's pages what he would like to find. For Mr. Bertrand is more interested in peoples than in numbers. And instead of columns of figures we find such interesting individuals as Oliver Daunais, Ambrose Cyrette, Simon Dawson, the McVickers, the McKellars and a whole host of others—where is old "Mag?"—to say nothing of that prince of *coureurs de bois*, Du Lhut. Perhaps these people may obscure the broad general outlines of the story, but there can be no question that they give liveliness as well as a sense of humanity to the pages of Mr. Bertrand's book. And after all history is made by people quite as much as by furs, minerals, lumber, paper, or wheat.

Professor Stanley is head of the Department of History at the Royal Military College, Kingston.

ARCTIC WINGS

by William A. Leising, O.M.I.

Doubleday & Company Inc., Garden City, New York. 535 pages. \$5.75

AND TO THE ESKIMO

by Gleason H. Ledyard

Moody Press, Chicago. 251 pages. \$3.75.

Reviewed by A. Copland

THE American born author of *Arctic Wings* is a Roman Catholic priest who served in the Vicariate of Mackenzie, under the late Bishop Trocellier, one of the best known leaders of his church in the north. The Bishop's long experience and his vision of the expanding north inspired the young priest to acquire skills in dentistry, navigation, engineering, meteorology and airman-ship all of which he put to good account in the remote mission field of the Canadian north.

Not the least of Father Leising's skills is his ability to write in graphic, compelling language that would do credit to a professional writer. This facility of expression keeps the narrative moving at a fast pace.

Many of the anecdotes and historical notes are repeats of what has already been written but they have been skilfully handled in a way that makes the reader appreciate the transformation that has been brought about in the north by the aeroplane.

The interesting accounts of dangerous flights to the remote missions such as Pelly Bay are reminders of the vast, unchanging north that has so far fortunately escaped the recent bustling activity and the savage probings of civilization. To this reviewer these accounts make good reading and are much preferred to the many descriptions of life in and around the expanding communities of the new north.

The locale of *And to the Eskimo* is the Eastern Arctic, although this airman missionary undertakes some remarkable flights to the arctic coast. As one of the leaders of the evangelical Eskimo Gospel Crusade, this dedicated, American-born author condemns what he calls "church-ianity" and is consumed with a desire to convert the individual. This he attempts by a great crusade of flying from camp to camp which is sometimes interrupted by freighting chores and often a courageous mercy flight.

The flights in sub-marginal weather and even in a badly damaged aircraft appear, from this reviewer's vantage point in a comfortable armchair, to be foolhardy and may have given the authorities some anxious hours regarding

his safety. But this missionary has an abiding faith that all will be well.

Between them these two books by missionaries of widely different convictions unroll the map of the Canadian north, with an insight into the day to day lives of the Indians and Eskimos.

In the Golden Age of discovery daring men sailed the unknown seas and credited much of their success to Faith. In this less credulous age there are still men who fly on dangerous missions who have a strong Faith and their success is revealed in these two books.

Mr. Copland of the Dept. of National Defence, is a veteran of the North.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

by Ira N. Gabrielson

Macmillan, New York.
244 pages. \$5.50.

THOUSAND ACRE MARSH

by Dudley Cammett Lunt

Macmillan, New York. 173 pages.
\$3.75

Reviewed by R. W. Sutton

THIS is the second and slightly revised edition of Dr. Gabrielson's book which first appeared in 1941. As its title implies, it is primarily a guide—a textbook if you will—dealing with the basic principles of wildlife conservation. This complex subject tends to become more involved with the passage of time, and Dr. Gabrielson's re-assessment of certain issues is opportune.

As new problems arise, new techniques must evolve. In this edition Dr. Gabrielson has sought to bring his earlier work more in line with recent developments. The major change is the insertion of an entire chapter dealing with wildlife on agricultural lands. Under this heading are discussed the problems set up by modern farming practices, including such relatively recent innovations as industrial farming and the use of new pesticides.

The opening chapter provides the foundation, for it deals with the basic sources of life—sunlight, soil, water and air, the cycle of this complicated business of living. In succeeding chapters the author discusses the intricate relationship between wildlife populations, agricultural activities, lumbering, settlement, and so on. Typical chapter headings are Soil and Wildlife, Grassland Conservation, Predator Relationships, and Wildlife Refuges. The final chapter deals exceptionally well with the issues facing wildlife conservation agencies, not the least of which is the lack of public understanding of the problems involved.

Dr. Gabrielson's long years of field experience enable him to clarify these problems, and to present them as a basic guide to any groups engaged in a program of wildlife conservation. Even the individual, whether farmer, hunter, naturalist or timber dealer, will find in this volume a better understanding of the role he plays in the maintenance of adequate wildlife populations.

This present edition has more "eye-appeal" than its predecessor, due largely to the more attractive type, clear chapter headings, revised flyway maps and more practical grouping of photo material.

THE Thousand Acre Marsh is a fresh-water marsh on the Delaware coast. It is this area, as well as the more northerly Maine coast that provides the backdrop for Mr. Lunt's reminiscences.

The sub-title of the book, *A Span of Remembrance*, might have been its main title, for it precisely describes the author's intent. Within these pages he brings us the well-remembered incidents of days spent in the woods, along the salt creeks and on the tidal marshes of his home country.

The writings of an outdoor man, naturalist, hunter, or as in this case a happy combination of both, lend themselves to a sort of subdivision by seasons. Unlike so many "autumn only" hunters, Mr. Lunt shows himself to be a keen observer of nature in all her guises, from budding spring to frozen winter. His portrayals of scenes and incidents are vivid and intensely absorbing. Thus he succeeds in guiding us through his four seasons, enjoying with him the night encounter with the bobcat, the autumn storm, wildfowling on a coastal marsh, and all the incidents that go to making remembered days afield. And being Mr. Lunt's companion, if only through the pages of his delightful book, is a pleasant experience indeed.

Mr. Sutton is Director of the Manitoba Museum and a naturalist by avocation.

ADVENTURES OF ZENAS LEONARD, FUR TRADER

Edited by John C. Ewers

University of Oklahoma Press; Burns & MacEachern, Toronto. 172 pages.
\$5.00

Reviewed by Clarence Tillenius

"... each female that had lost a near relative or particular friend collected along a log and deliberately cut off a finger at the first joint, which was done with as much coolness as the pricking process. This is done by the males also, except the two first fingers on the right hand, which they preserve for the pur-

pose of bending the bow, and many of the aged females may be seen with the end off each of their fingers, and some have even taken off the second crop." Leonard thus describes a mourning custom among the Crows, one of many jotted down by him in five years wandering among Indians and trappers from 1831-35.

Could all the adventure-crowded lives of the early mountain men and free trappers of the Rockies have been recorded then, information of inestimable value to historians today would have been preserved. Certainly the majority of men making history in the West had neither desire nor skill to set their stories down: all honour, then, to the few who did record what they saw.

At 21, his father's Pennsylvania farm grown irksome, Zenas Leonard left St. Louis for a grim year trapping on the Laramie River for Gantt and Blackwell. There followed two years as a free trapper; a meeting with Bonneville in 1833 and subsequent expedition under Capt. J. R. Walker overland to California and back; thirst, and starvation; a year of wandering in search of fur among savage tribes and equally fierce white trappers; and finally the return in 1835 to a family which had given him up as dead.

For the casual reader (maybe the historian too, for all I know) the allure of such accounts as this lies partly in tracing through many contemporary accounts the differing interpretations of the same events. Many of the personalities and incidents of later works are noted in Leonard's "Narrative." Mr. Ewers' scholarly editing and informative footnotes add much to the book's interest for present day readers.

Mr. Tollenius has read widely on exploration of the West, having covered many of the little known areas himself.

HOW TO GO LIVE IN THE WOODS ON \$10 A WEEK

by Bradford Angier

The Stackpole Company, Harrisburg, Pa. 1959. 269 pages. \$5.00.

THIS is surely the ultimate in 'tell-it-how' books. Not only does Angier give the addresses to which to apply for land that is almost given away (and he includes agencies which may furnish a job in case of need) but he describes how to build your cabin once you are there. He tells you what you may expect to eat, from moose and bear to ducks and berries—not forgetting the sourdough—and gives details about the most suitable kind of gun, how to preserve your meat and fish and how to make your bread. He covers everything concerned with

wilderness living—clothing, hunting, transport, equipment, with reminders about the difficulty of packing goods in from the nearest source of supply, the necessity for some books (and even how to get them from distant city libraries), and how best to discourage mosquitoes. The chapter on edible plants, with illustrations, and some of the recipes will be useful to those who do not propose to live in the bush.

The territory favoured for this kind of inexpensive, self-sufficient living is Alaska and Northern Canada. Besides his own extensive wilderness experience, Mr. Angier has tapped all local sources of information for his readers, with resultant glowing accounts of teeming game and fish in the northern parts of the provinces.

If you are contemplating life in the wilds, away-from-it-all, this is the kind of book to study first. If urban comforts have a stronger appeal, you can still find useful suggestions for the week-end cabin, and may even be inspired to whip up a dish of puree rose hips that you have gathered yourself—or bought in the local market.—M.B.

ANERCA

by Edmund Carpenter

Dent & Sons, Toronto. 1959. \$2.75.

ESKIMO art in one form or another seems to be always with us. Here, it is poetry or songs, and drawings—a few words, a few sketches, scattered on a grey page.

The poems, of course, were not written; some in this little collection are old ones that have spanned generations, others were created to fit an occasion. They were collected and translated by various people, the majority by Rasmussen's Fifth Thule Expedition, that treasury of Eskimo lore, some by Edmund Carpenter himself. The drawings were brought from Baffin Island by Robert Flaherty in 1914. In reading poems from another language, a great deal depends on

the sensitivity of the translator. In this, the Eskimos have been well served. The effect, in simplicity of words and concern with elemental things, is akin to translations of some early Chinese poems.

Dr. Carpenter obviously took pleasure in making the book and those who savour words and feeling will take pleasure in reading it, but some will feel it is too closely approaching the precious with its consciously careful arrangement that results in eighteen words on an unnumbered page even if the paper, the type, and the words themselves are of the finest quality.—M.B.

THREE AGAINST THE WILDERNESS

by Eric Collier

E. P. Dutton, N.Y. 349 pages. \$4.95.

THIS is a biography of an Englishman who migrated to British Columbia nearly forty years ago, put in a stint in a trading store, then decided to make his life in the wilds, together with part-Indian wife (his greatest asset) and infant son. They built a cabin in a remote part of the Chilcotin, in an arid, unpromising area, with trapping rights over 150,000 acres. Hunting and trapping were their livelihood, and fur-bearers were scarce. The story of a lifetime spent close to nature, with its hardships and its problems, its satisfactions and serenity, is pleasantly and simply told.

On the theory that all life began at the water's edge, the first project was to bring back water to the parched country. This was done by repairing old beaver dams, where there had been no beaver in the inhabitants' recollection. This proved effective and ten years' work was crowned when the government sent in two pairs of beavers. They multiplied and they conserved the water, and the Colliers conserved the beavers and carefully observed their work. In time plant and animal life returned bountifully. Restoring the land to fruitfulness is the theme and the triumph of the book.—M.B.

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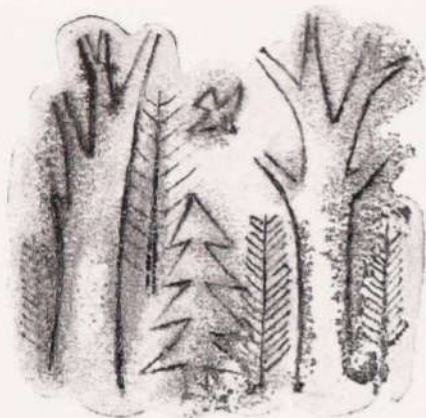
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THE FLOOD

Long, long ago all the north of this country was under ice, but when the ice melted there were great floods and the waters all swept down to the lands which were already inhabited by the Indians. Everybody was in danger and all and sundry were getting drowned when Iktoomi [a mythical hero] took pity on them and decided that he must save some people. He therefore saved one man and one woman, and one male and one female of each kind of animal. He built a large raft and he put them all on it and they all floated about on the flood waters.

After seven days however Iktoomi went to the beaver and he told the beaver that he must try and dive right to the bottom, under the flood waters, and see if he could bring him up a bit of dirt. The poor beaver dived and dived but he never could reach the bottom, and he could never find the piece of dirt. So Iktoomi told him to rest, and the next day Iktoomi took hold of the muskrat and he said to him: "You try and see if you can bring me up a bit of mud." Well the little muskrat dived very deep and he didn't come up. They all got very worried and they waited and waited; presently about five hours later the dead body of the muskrat floated to the surface of the water near the raft. Iktoomi took it on the raft and found in the muskrat's paw there was a little mound of mud. Iktoomi revived the rat and brought him back to life, and he took this little bit of mud and he moulded it with his fingers and as he moulded it the mud grew and grew. Finally he put it over the side of the raft and it went on growing into solid land so that soon he could land from the raft with all the animals. And the land still went on growing and growing from where he had moulded it.

When all the animals were ashore and the land was still growing, he waited till it was out of sight and then he got hold of the wolf and he told the wolf to run round the earth and only to come back and tell him when the earth was big enough to hold a large population.

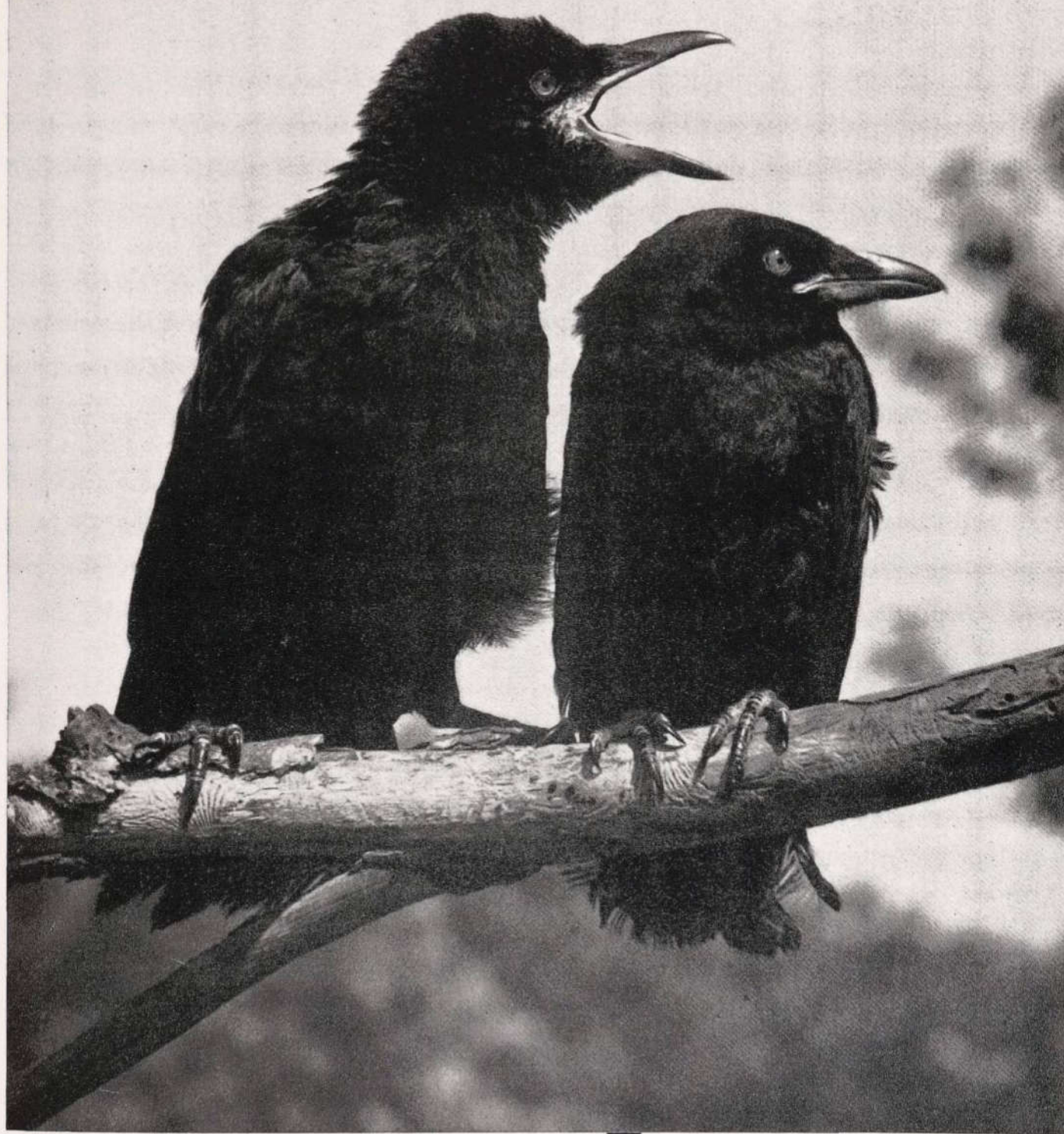
Dr. Elizabeth E. Cass, ophthalmologist with the Indian Health Services, has for some years been collecting Indian stories and legends in different parts of the country. Versions of legends, differing from tribe to tribe, form an interesting and often informative study. This Plains Indian story of the flood was told to Dr. Cass by the Stoney or Assiniboine people. Indians of the northwest told about the flood before they had been in contact with white men; there were similar stories among the Eskimos, the Loucheux and the Hurons.

Meanwhile he assembled all the animals in a circle and he sang them spirit songs and he made them dance the first Sun Dance.

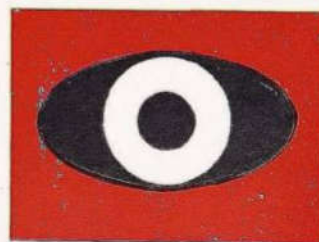
Now the wolf took seven years on his voyage but he couldn't quite complete his tour of the world. He crept back home exhausted at Iktoomi's feet. Iktoomi then told the little raven to go out and see if he could complete the bit of the world that the wolf had not seen. Now the raven in those days was quite white, and he flew off to do Iktoomi's bidding. But instead of flying as he was told to do, he got hungry and seeing a corpse floating by he flew down and began to pick at it. Then he flew home again, and when Iktoomi saw him he knew that he had been eating a dead body, for his beak was full of blood. So he seized hold of him and said to him: "Since you have such a dirty nature, you shall have a dirty colour." The raven was turned from white to black and that colour he remains to this day.

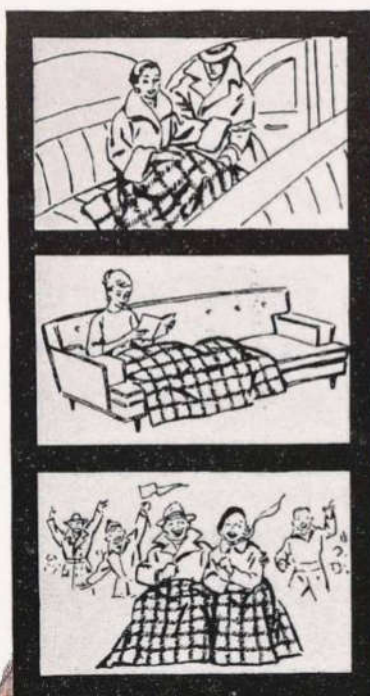
Now during this time, when they were dancing the Sun Dance, all the animals and man were friendly and Iktoomi could speak to all of them in their languages and they all could converse with each other. When the raven came back and was turned black, Iktoomi told them all to go into the world and prosper and multiply, and left them.

The Stoney Indian told me there was this religious significance in the Sun Dance, and why it is done to this day. He said it was done in remembrance of Iktoomi and the flood. He told me that it was a dance of penitence, and that the rites were a penance. But he could not explain why in the original Sun Dance, as danced in the south, men were strung up with thongs skewered through their breasts and had to dance till the thongs broke loose. Nor why they dragged around buffalo skulls tied to pieces of wood that went through the skin of their shoulders. All he knew was that in this story was the origin of the Sun Dance.



Young crows, photographed by Leonard Lee Rue III, eye their surroundings with apparent disapproval.





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